

**IF BOOKS COULD TALK:
Liberty, Port Trevorton and the Strange Connection**

by Milton Loyer, 1993

That the Conference Archives contains scores of old books, each with its own story to tell, is obvious. One such volume recently discovered during the reorganization of the archives, however, deserves special mention. An over-sized, leather-bound, 456-page ledger with "Church Records" printed on the spine, this particular book contains valuable records, helps to fill historical gaps in the conference history and leaves just enough unsaid to tease the imagination.

The Liberty Charge of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association was formed in 1870. In the front part of this volume are that charge's original handwritten membership, marriage and baptismal records from 1870 to 1894.

There were ten classes¹: Liberty, West Liberty, Harts, Nauvoo, Oregon Hill, Steam Mills, Lock Mills, Zion, Bethlehem No. 1 and Bethlehem No. 2. Notations indicate who was expelled, moved away, died or transferred membership. One member was described as "no good," while another [Mrs. Jacob (Hannah) Brion, page 61] was listed as the "granddaughter of Jacob Albright."

The first marriage united Christian Glockler and Jane E. Black, on September 27, 1870. The first baptism occurred April 30, 1870, and welcomed into the fellowship little Catharine Bland, born to John and Mary Bland on August 11 of the previous year.

In each section, the records were entered chronologically by the current charge pastor and confirm the March-to-March ministerial appointments as listed by the various conference journals.

1870-71 Z. Hornberger	1881-83 James M. Price
1871-72 M.W. Harris	1883-86 F.S. Vought
1872-74 J.M. King	1886-89 James R. Sechrist
1874-76 Henry N. Greninger	1889-91 William Minsker
1876-79 Noah Young	1891-94 William E. Brillhart
1879-81 M. Sloat	

At this point, a strange gap occurs in the otherwise

typical charge record book. In the marriage records, for example, the November 5, 1893, union of Austin E. Teed and Nonie B. Breed (performed by W.E. Brillhart for ten dollars and witnessed by the "parents of the bride and many friends") is followed by the July 23, 1901, union of Adam E. Kamp and Anna L. Moyer (performed by a Rev. Ezra E. Haney for five dollars and witnessed by E.E. Moyer). In the baptismal section, the March 3, 1894, baptisms by W.E. Brillhart of seven year old Harry Earnest Houser (b. October 8, 1886, to William and Mary Houser) and his four year old sister Elma (b. January 19, 1890) are followed by the May 6, 1900, baptism by a Rev. W.A. Leopold, district superintendent, of Lawrence Leopold Neitz (b. January 1, 1900). After five entries by a J.L. Boyer appear the baptismal records of the Rev. Ezra E. Haney, whose name followed Brillhart's in the marriage section.

The names of the Reverends J.L. Boyer and E.E. Haney and district superintendent W.A. Leopold appear in no journals or other records of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Who are these men? and why is there a six year gap in the records? A similar six year gap appears in the membership section of the book, but with additional information that only raises additional questions: the list of those joining the Kohler's Class of the Liberty Charge in 1894 is followed by the 1900 membership lists of classes for Witmers, Port Trevorton, Daniels, St. John's, Aline and (later) Fremont.

Research reveals the latter classes to be those of the Port Trevorton Charge of the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association. At this time (i.e., 1900), there was no Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association, as virtually the entire conference elected to side with the seceding faction of the denomination's 1894 split. From 1894 until the 1922 re-union, therefore, all but a handful of the area's Evangelical churches were a part of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the new denomination, the United Evangelical Church.

Because of the dominance of the United Evangelical Church over the Evangelical Association in Central Pennsylvania during the 1894-1922 split, little information has survived regarding the few congregations that elected to remain with the Association. In fact, the existing conference histories and records display a distinct bias toward the United Evangelicals for those years and an unfortunate neglect of the Evangelical Association.

This paper combines information from the record book with other archival material to unfold the stories of the Evangelical Association split in Liberty and Port Trevorton,

and to reconstruct the record book's missing six years and sudden re-activation.

Liberty

Pioneer missionary John Seybert introduced Block House [Liberty] to the Evangelical Association in 1830 and it became an appointment on a large rural circuit covering several counties. The first church building was erected in 1848, and in 1851 the Block House Circuit was formed. In 1870 the circuit reorganized as the Liberty Circuit and began a new record book. As the work expanded, two men were assigned to cover the circuit. Finally, in 1879, the circuit was divided into the Liberty and East Liberty charges. At the time of the split, the Liberty and East Liberty charge owned 2.83 (Liberty, Oregon Hill $\frac{2}{3}$ of Steam Mills and $\frac{1}{6}$ of Nauvoo) and 1.33 (East Point and $\frac{1}{3}$ of Union) buildings respectively.

The congregation in Liberty was divided by the controversy. Those loyal to the Association maintained possession of the building but abandoned the work after a few years. The church, which stood on Main Street several lots south of the present UM building, was moved east about seven miles to serve as the Association church at South Union Center. The work there did not survive either, and the structure is now a town hall.

Those siding with the United Evangelical Church withdrew and eventually built the existing Liberty UM Church. The 1897 Tioga County History describes the situation as follows:

The United Evangelical Church of Liberty is a member of the new denomination resulting from differences arising in the general conference of the Evangelical Association some years ago. A number of the members of the church in Liberty withdrew from the old society and joined the newer organization, adherents of which are also to be found at Nauvoo and in the Beuter school and Frock school neighborhoods. The church in Liberty numbers fourteen members, and maintains a Sunday School, of which Samuel Hartman is the superintendent. Meetings are held in a rented building. Rev. M. Kennelley was the first pastor of this church, which is now served by Rev. L.M. Dice.

At Oregon Hill, the congregation sided firmly with the United Evangelicals but still lost their building. They built a more commodious structure across the road from the cemetery in which the Association church stood. The Association building was torn down soon after the split, while the United Evangelical structure remained in use until the membership dwindled and the conference declared the church closed in 1961. The property, now an independent church, was reported sold in 1982 for \$700.

When the Steam Mills congregation decided in favor of the United Evangelicals, it appears that the building's union arrangement allowed them to continue worshipping there. The congregation, which never was very large and had lost several families to the Disciples well before the split, eventually dwindled away and its remaining members probably transferred to the Buttonwood Church that was erected by the United Evangelicals at a later date.

The United Evangelicals eventually absorbed Association classes at the Nauvoo union church building and at the Beuter and Frock school houses. Later they acquired the Lutheran and the Methodist shares of the Nauvoo building and erected their own building at Beuters; these are the present Nauvoo and Beuters UM Churches.

The East Point church began as a branch of the work at Liberty, erected a building in 1886, and became the nucleus of the East Liberty (later East Point) Charge. It, too, was divided by the controversy. Those in the congregation partial to the United Evangelicals incorporated June 3, 1895, as the Ebenezer United Evangelical Church of East Point and built about 100 yards up the road from the Association church. The Association congregation dwindled over the years and barely survived until the 1922 re-union. The present East Point UM congregation worships in the United Evangelical church and the Association structure is a community building.

The Union Church, between Liberty and East Point, was erected in 1891 and remained with the Association throughout the split. Although never large, the congregation functioned into the 1960's and had the distinction of being the area's last remaining pro-Esher church. Not having been used since the 1968 United Methodist merger, the building was sold in 1983 and now houses the Liberty Area Historical Society.

Port Trevorton

There were six churches on the Port Trevorton Charge when different pastors began to be assigned by the competing factions in 1891: Port Trevorton, Richfield (aka Pine), Daniels, Aline (aka Troutmans, Emanuels), Fremont, Witmer's. There appears to be more bitterness and less reliable documentation about what occurred during the years after 1891 in the Port Trevorton vicinity than for any other charge. Only the names of the pastors, and not detailed charge information, is available from journals.

Pastors Assigned 1891-1922

<i>United Evangelical</i>	<i>Association</i>
1891-93 S. Smith	1891-94 Kindt
1893-96 S.E. Davis	1894-95 Wilson
1896-98 W.C. Hoch	1895-98 E.E. Gilbert
1898-01 W.E. Brillhart	1898-00 J.H. Fenstermacher
1901-04 H.T. Searle	1900-01 J.L. Boyer
1904-06 J.D. Stover	1901-05 E.E. Haney
1906-07 L. Dice	1905-12 A.S. Bierly
1907-11 M.J. Snyder	1912-15 H.E. Hildt
1911-13 D.A. Ertel	1915-18 M.S. Mumma
1913-17 B.F. Keller	1918-20 O.G. Martin
1917-18 C.A. Fray	1920-23 G.H. Burrell
1918-21 F.F. Mayer	
1921-23 C.W. Hipple	

The denominational split divided the Port Trevorton church, and there were two congregations after 1891. The clear majority that sided with the Dubs faction hoped to maintain control of the original building and to see the Association loyalists dwindle away. When the court awarded the property to the Esher-Bowman faction, however, the latter received a new lease on life and the United Evangelicals were forced to erect a new sanctuary.

The Association building, a frame structure referred to as the "White Church" erected sometime before 1850, stood on the vacant space several lots north of the present parsonage. Unable to compete with the United Evangelicals, the congregation dwindled during the split. While there may have been a handful of members on the books at the time of the 1922 re-merger, it appears that services were no longer being held. Unused for many years, the building was standing in ruins when it was destroyed in the August 1949 blaze that burned out the center of town and prompted the formation of the local fire department.

The United Evangelical building, erected in 1894 and named Olive, stood on the vacant space a few lots north of the site of the Association building. Markwood Church of the former United Brethren denomination, which had been erected in 1873 on the site of the present parsonage, and Olive Church united to form the Grace congregation in 1952 and moved to their current location in 1957.

In 1891, the Richfield congregation of the Evangelical Association was meeting in the Pine Church, a former union building with the Methodists (who had abandoned the work) and United Brethren (who erected their own structure in town in 1876), that stood by the present cemetery southeast of town. While the records are not complete, it appears that the union

nature of the building allowed both groups to use the Pine Church following the division. About 1905 the Association faction apparently sold its interest in the property and abandoned the appointment. In 1914 the United Evangelicals constructed a building in Richfield and moved the appointment to town. As that location was already oversaturated with churches, the work never really prospered and the structure was finally sold in the mid 1930's to United Brethren members O.B. Basom (brother of Evangelical preacher E.C. Basom) and Homer Hood -- who donated it to their congregation (now Richfield UM) to serve as a fellowship hall.

The Daniels congregation, whose building was erected in 1871, remained with the Association during the split. Today Daniels UM Church is one of very few congregations of the former Central Pennsylvania Conference that sided with the Association throughout the division and survives to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the split in their original building.

At Aline, the congregation divided and those siding with the United Evangelicals erected a new building beside the Association's 1869 structure. The two congregations were supplied by their respective denominations until the 1922 re-merger, when the smaller Association faction was absorbed by the United Evangelical group and their building was dismantled. Today's Aline UM congregation worships in the 1894 United Evangelical building.

When the controversy divided the congregation at Fremont (now called Mount Pleasant Mills), the Association maintained control of the building. Known locally as the "Dam Church," the structure stood two blocks north of the town's crossroads on a site now used to park trucks and was served throughout the division. When services there were discontinued about 1930, most of the members transferred to the United Brethren congregation, now Emmanuel UM. The building was sold to Rev. O.G. Martin, who used the lumber to erect a shed that still stands on the property now owned by his son about one mile north of town. While the United Evangelicals supplied Fremont following the division, their congregation survived only a few years and apparently never erected a building.

Witmer's Church northeast of Port Trevorton may have been the site of the most bitter and prolonged struggle in the conference.² Local tradition states that when the United Evangelicals erected a separate building in 1894, opposite the "Esher Church", feelings were so strong that coffins were removed from the original Association cemetery and carried



Fremont Church of the Evangelical Association

across the road to be reburied in the graveyard of the new denomination. A check of the new cemetery reveals several inscriptions that appear to confirm the story. Most re-interments represent pre-1894 deaths of children or spouses of adults later siding with the United Evangelicals; although in at least one case "grandma and grandpa" who died in the 1860's were moved to be buried in the church of their descendants.

Following the 1922 re-merger, both congregations were part of the Evangelical Church's large Port Trevorton Circuit, but feelings from the split were so deep that they could not be re-united. Starting in 1930 Witmer's First [or Witmer's West] (Association) and Witmer's East (United Evangelical) were served from Selinsgrove and Hummels Wharf respectively. That arrangement lasted until 1964, when the Susquehanna Conference (EUB) was formed and the First and East churches were placed on a single charge. It wasn't until a fire destroyed the Witmer's East building in December 1964, however, that the congregations began worshipping together. Six months later, in June 1965, the two congregations formally voted to unite and to end the conference's final obvious evidence of the 1894 split.



Witmer's First (left) of the Evangelical Association
and Witmer's East (right) of the United Evangelical Church
as they appeared in 1955

Although not an official appointment in 1891, Hoover's Church south of Selinsgrove also found itself involved in the split. While Evangelical Association work there began in 1886, the class was not formally organized until 1892. The mounting controversy in the denomination divided the new congregation, and the factions began meeting in different locations. While the United Evangelical sympathizers eventually erected Hoover's Church in 1898, the fate of the

other group is unclear. One tradition states that the Association supporters formed and/or joined St. Paul's Lutheran Church, located directly across the road. Complicating the picture is the following 1902 resolution of the Association's East Pennsylvania Conference.

WHEREAS, The trustees of the St. Peter's (Hoover's) church ask permission to sell said church and devote the proceeds to the repairing of the parsonage and churches on the Port Trevorton Circuit, therefore
RESOLVED, That this matter be referred to the Presiding Elder of the District, the preacher in charge and Rev. S.I. Shortess,³ for proper disposition.

The location of this building and the disposition of the matter remain a mystery.

In 1891 St. John's Church near Cocolamus was apparently a part of the Juniata Circuit, not the Port Trevorton Circuit, although the records are not clear. When the denominational division split the St. John's congregation, however, both the Association and the United Evangelicals placed the appointment on their Port Trevorton Charges. Even though the 1887 building remained with the Association, a provision in the church's charter specified that any orthodox denomination be allowed to use the structure; consequently, both groups continued meeting at St. John's. Unfortunately, neither group was strong enough to function alone and by about 1907 there were no regular services at all. By 1917 the building had begun to show alarming deterioration, and the United Evangelicals collected money to purchase the property from the Association.

The final area Evangelical church involved was Dressler's Ridge. Unfortunately, the records are too sketchy to make any definitive statements beyond the fact that the building was erected in 1870. On what circuit the appointment was located before the split, and how it sided during the division, are not known. The congregation has always been small, and it may have gone through periods of inactivity. It first appears by name in the 1923 journal when it is placed on the Fremont Circuit in the reorganization following the re-merger -- and it is called "Tressler's." It next appears in 1930 as a delinquent appointment on the Port Trevorton Circuit -- and is called "Bressler's Ridge." It is not mentioned again until 1952 when it is "reopened" and placed on the Freeburg Circuit in the reorganization following the addition of the area United Brethren churches to the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

As indicated by the above accounts, the 1922 re-merger produced two overlapping charges, with former United Evangelical and Association parsonages in Port Trevorton and

Fremont respectively. The conference grouped the surviving churches as follows.

Port Trevorton: *Port Trevorton (UE), Witmers East (UE),
Witmers West (EA), Hoover's (UE), Aline (UE)*
Fremont: *Fremont (EA), Richfield (UE), Daniels (EA),
St. John's (UE), Dressler's (?)*.

Instituted in 1923, at the first conference following union, this arrangement helped to re-unite the former competing denominations and congregations remarkably well and lasted until 1928. In addition, local/retired Association pastors O.G. Martin⁴ and A.S. Bierly,⁵ who lived in Fremont and Verdilla respectively, continued to minister throughout the transition.

<u>Post-Merger Pastors of the Evangelical Church</u>			
<u>Port Trevorton Charge</u>		<u>Fremont Charge</u>	
1923-34	C.W. Hipple	1923-25	C.H. Bankes ⁶
1924	G. Gaugler	1925	A.S. Bierly
...		...	

It is unfortunate that both in Port Trevorton and throughout the Evangelical Church's Central Pennsylvania Conference, the churches that sided with the Association were shown little consideration.⁷ Wherever two churches existed following the re-merger, it was invariably the Association building that was closed. Part of this may be attributed to the United Evangelical buildings being newer and, consequently, better located to accommodate late nineteenth century population shifts.

Even the 1939 History of the Central Pennsylvania Conference written seventeen years after re-merger continues to portray the United Evangelicals and Association as "us" and "them." Of the nearby Mexico Charge, for example, it notes, "In the time of the division in 1891 to 1894 the earlier records may have been taken over by the Association and so we have no access to much that we desire." Where there were competing churches 1894-1922, the names of the Association pastors are supplied only for the Rebersburg and Sugar Valley Charges. In general, the book downplays former Association connections and misses the opportunity to provide a truly unified history -- thus making difficult efforts today to reconstruct the events of that era.

The 1968 Histories of the Pennsylvania and Central Conferences, perhaps in the interest of "simplicity," perpetuates and even enhances the anti-Association bias. While the parallel 1894-1922 appointment list is preserved for

Rebersburg, for example, only the United Evangelical pastors are listed for Sugar Valley.

This section closes with the record book's notation [page 86] written by Rev. E.E. Haney in 1905 that gives the Association account of what happened on that denomination's Port Trevorton circuit following the split:

After the disruption of our church in the spring of 1891, the seceders had everything in their hands until after the Supreme Court decided against them October 1, 1894. In the interval Rev. Kindt was appointed to look after the interest of the church. In the fall of 1894 Brother Kindt was killed and Brother Wilson was appointed in his place.

At the conference held in Newberry^s March 4-7, 1895, Rev. E.E. Gilbert was stationed on this circuit to rebuild the broken walls of our beloved church. Everything was disrupted with the exception of one church (Daniels). Rev. Gilbert labored earnestly for three years and succeeded in replacing the stolen property either by purchasing new or compelling the parties that had taken the old furniture to restore it again.

At the conference held in Bethlehem on February 24 - March 2, 1898, Rev. J.F. Fenstermaker was assigned to Port Trevorton Circuit. After J.L. Boyer spending but one year here he was transferred to Sugar Valley Circuit and E.E. Haney succeeded him, being appointed by the East Pennsylvania Conference held at Norristown February 28 - March 5, 1901. The circuit was in a bad condition; churches as well as the parsonage needed repairs. After conference we began to remodel and repair the churches and parsonage. We spent four good and happy years on this charge and by the time we left all the churches and the parsonage were in a good condition. During the four years we spent 350 dollars for repairs and the spiritual atmosphere was good. We had 97 conversions, but the salary part was far below par -- receiving for the four years' work only 630 dollars. Thus on account of the limitation we were compelled to move. We were appointed to the Spring Mills Circuit by the conference held at Pottsville February 23-28, 1905, and Rev. A.S. Bierly was appointed as E.E. Haney's successor.

The Strange Connection

Now one must answer the questions posed at the beginning of this paper. Why is there a six year gap in the record book? Why are United Evangelical entries from Liberty in Tioga County followed by Evangelical Association entries for Port Trevorton in Snyder County?

The one name appearing in both the list of Liberty pastors given in the book and the list of Port Trevorton pastors assembled from the journals is W. E. Brillhart. Furthermore, he is the last named pastor on the Liberty list in 1894 and the United Evangelical pastor on the Port Trevorton Charge in 1900 when the Association entries of E.E.

Haney begin. While the following scenario is only the conjecture of one author, it is presented as a summary account of the personalities and situations typical of the 1894 split.

W.E. Brillhart had a challenging 1891-94 pastorate at Liberty. While the appointments were progressing both numerically and spiritually, the Dubs-Esher controversy was affecting the entire charge and threatened to divide the membership. Both saddened and relieved when the March 1894 annual conference moved him to the neighboring Grover Circuit, where the threat of division was not so great, he decided to carry the charge record book along. It appeared that the congregation in Liberty was about to lose its building to the Association, but he felt that the record book should remain with the bulk of the people and the "true church." One way to ensure this would be to maintain possession of the volume until it could be returned at a later date.

When the 1896 conference assigned W.E. Brillhart to Bryansville, in southern York County, the dust had not yet settled at Liberty. The split had devastated the work in town, and the handful of people standing up for the United Evangelicals (having lost the building, as expected, to the Association) were still meeting in a rented hall. Since the book could not be returned for danger of it being claimed by the Association, and since it would be awkward for him to acknowledge his possession of the volume, Rev. Brillhart decided to take it quietly with him.

Assigned in 1898 to the United Evangelical's Port Trevorton Circuit, W.E. Brillhart again had to face the competing Association -- and his conscience, for having kept the Liberty record book for four years. Finally, in a conversation about the effects of the split on the work of the denomination, he let it be known that he had carried the record book from Liberty -- and he may have even openly shelved it with other books.

On May 6, 1900, presiding elder W.A. Leopold of the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association came to town. Although responsible for the Williamsport District (essentially the former Central Pennsylvania Conference churches that had remained with the Association augmented by enough churches from Millersburg to Pottsville to create a legitimate district), he resided in Philadelphia. The trip to Port Trevorton was occasioned by the baptism of his five month old grandson Lawrence Leopold Neitz.

Imagine the reaction of the presiding elder when the pastor of the Association's Port Trevorton Charge, Rev. J. L. Boyer, informed him that the circuit owned no official book in

which the record little Lawrence's baptism could be entered! James L. Boyer had just been received into the conference as a preacher on trial at the February 1900 annual session, and Port Trevorton was his first assignment. The presiding elder must now show the young pastor how to get things done.

"Is there no record book in all of Port Trevorton?" bellowed Presiding Elder Leopold. Recalling the story of the "borrowed" Liberty record book in the possession of United Evangelical preacher W.E. Brillhart, J.L. Boyer stated that was the only known record book in town.

The more the story unfolded, the more animated the visiting presiding elder became. Marching down to the United Evangelical parsonage, and armed with a stern rebuke that climaxed in the recitation of the 1894 State Supreme Court decision awarding all former Association property to the Esher faction of the denomination, he demanded the record book. Surprised at the intrusion, but not really intimidated by the presiding elder's antics, Rev. Brillhart was just tired of the hiding and the bickering. He turned the volume over to the Reverends Leopold and Boyer.

As J.L. Boyer carefully penned the name of Lawrence Leopold Neitz, the volume's first entry in over six years, the United Evangelical ledger from Liberty became the Evangelical Association record book of Port Trevorton. Rev. Boyer would record five more baptisms before being reassigned in 1901; it would be his successor, E.E. Haney, who would begin using the book to its fullest to record marriages, baptisms, membership lists and other explanatory remarks.

Following the 1922 re-merger, the book stayed in the former Association parsonage, was passed to the Fremont Circuit, and recorded the affairs there until the charge was dissolved at the March 1928 annual conference.

If books have spirits, this one could not resist one more tease: following Rev. A.S. Bierly's February 19, 1928, baptism of six year old Dorothy N. Pyle, the final record of the Fremont Charge, there is a single unexplained entry -- the July 6, 1947, baptism of eight month old Anna Kay Shellenberger by a Rev. E.E. Dunkleberger,⁹ whom research shows to be of the Allegheny Conference of the United Brethren denomination!

FOOTNOTES

1. The ten classes of the circuit may be described as follows:

- a. Liberty - A building was erected by the Evangelical Association in 1848 and moved to another location when the congregation failed following the 1894 split. The site, at the south end of town, is now occupied by a trucking company and its former religious use is marked only an unkept cemetery on the hill behind the garages.
- b. West Liberty - This class apparently met in homes and dissolved when it was determined that most of the members could conveniently associate with either the Harts or the Liberty class.
- c. Harts - This was the original name for the Beuter's class. A building was erected there by the United Evangelicals about 1910 and is today's Beuter's UM Church.
- d. Nauvoo - St. Paul's Union Church was erected at Nauvoo in 1877 by the Evangelical Lutheran (13/24 interest), the Evangelical Association (7/24 interest) and the Methodist Episcopal (4/24 interest) denominations. The Methodists and Lutherans gave up their interests in the building in 1912 and 1961 respectively, and the property became United Methodist via the EUB side of the 1968 merger.
- e. Oregon Hill - The existing independent church occupies the the former United Evangelical structure. The Evangelical Association had erected a building in the cemetery across the road around 1870. The former Methodist church at Oregon Hill stood in the small vacant lot east of the existing church's property.
- f. Steam Mills - It appears that this class, which was always small, eventually followed the population shift and formed and/or merged into the Buttonwood Church that stood across from the old schoolhouse and was abandoned about 1968. The Steam Valley Church in which they worshipped, believed to have been built as a union structure prior to the 1894 split, still stands.
- g. Lock Mills - This was the original name for the Grover class. As an opinionated notation in the record book indicates, "In the spring of 1874 this class was transferred to the Canton Circuit, or rather more proper, was one of the classes that was taken from Liberty Circuit to constitute part of the Canton Circuit." Today this St. John's UM Church of Grover.
- h. Zion - This class met north of Liberty near Sebring. It is conjectured that the class was weakened by the controversy surrounding the split, and today only Zion Lutheran Church (founded in 1896) serves the area.
- i. and j. Bethlehem No. 1 and No. 2 - These classes merged to form the East Liberty Church when the 1886 erection of church building no longer necessitated holding meetings in two separate homes.

2. Considering the bitterness that prevailed at Witmers, it might be relevant to note that this was not that congregation's first split. Several dissatisfied members left the 1835 log structure in 1857 to form a new Association congregation. They erected a brick building on a triangular plot of ground where three roads came together "behind" Port Trevorton and about 2.5 miles south of the Witmers Church. After the new church prospered for a while and then dwindled, most of the remaining members rejoined Witmers and the property later became the Mt. Zion United Brethren Church. While a widened intersection now occupies the site of the building, the nearby hillside cemetery is still in use.

3. The denominational split divided clergy families as well as congregations and laity. The Association's Samuel Irvine Shortess (1834-1910) was the father of the Central Pennsylvania Conference's prominent United Evangelical pastor J.D. Shortess (1860-1953; two-time district superintendent, delegate to six General Conferences, historian). A former superintendent of Union Seminary and

one of the conference's most distinguished members to side with the Association during the split, S.I. Shortess pastored the Waller Charge 1889-92 during the initial stages of the controversy and was responsible for making it the only charge in that part of the conference to experience a division. He was also instrumental in trying to re-introduce the Association to Millersburg following the split. Apparently he was able to hold his convictions with good Christian character and served as a bridge between the competing denominations. There was no longer an Association building in Millersburg when he died in 1910, and his funeral was held in the United Evangelical church there. His role as a peacemaker bore its final fruit in 1922 when Millersburg was the only northern Dauphin County United Evangelical congregation to put bygones aside and participate in the re-merger.

4. Although Oscar Graybill Martin (1883-1965) served in many roles and in several conferences, his name is missing from the 1968 Histories of the Pennsylvania and Central Pennsylvania Conferences. The 1939 History of the Central Pennsylvania Conference incorrectly states he was "licensed in 1914 at Berwick (Bower Memorial), session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference." During the split, however, Rev. Martin identified with the Evangelical Association and not the United Evangelical Church. He was, in fact, licensed by the Association's East Pennsylvania Conference in 1909 and ordained by Bishop William Horn at their 1914 annual session in Elizabethville. A native of Snyder County, he served the following Association appointments: Mifflin Circuit 1909-11, Spring Mills 1911-13, Sugar Valley 1913-17, Wayne 1917-18, and Port Trevorton 1918-20. He then settled in Fremont (Mount Pleasant Mills), associated with the United Brethren Church there after the Evangelicals closed their church there about 1930, and continued ministering as a local preacher as needed. He served the New York Conference's East Stone Evangelical Church in Arabia, NY, 1949-50, before returning home and taking the initiative to re-open the Dressler's Ridge Church 1950-52. At age 68, he formally requested to be placed back on the active list and served Freeburg 1952-56.

5. Adam Sylvester Bierly (1863-1947) was a native of Sugar Valley. He was licensed by the Association's East Pennsylvania Conference in 1901 and served in their itinerant ministry for 21 years. After the re-merger, he was accepted by the Central Pennsylvania Conference as a "local deacon" and served the Fremont charge from 1925 until that appointment was discontinued in the 1928 re-alignment. He had a reputation for enthusiasm and stories still in circulation by those who remember him include accounts of him "getting happy" and jumping over the altar railing on more than one occasion and of him interrupting a service to throw a hymnbook in the direction of some "rowdies."

6. C. Harold Bankes, a native of Mainville, was licensed by the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church in 1920. He served several appointments, including a period as caretaker of Central Oak Heights, before retiring in 1934. In the light of subsequent events, his 1923 appointment to bring together a formerly divided charge is somewhat ironic. In 1943 he began a devotional newsletter intended to encourage those serving in the armed forces, but over time this (which successively carried the names *Evangelical Devotions*, *Christian Devotions*, and *The Evangelical Challenge*) and other publications became more opinionated and were circulated within the conference. Conference journals over the years include a detailed account of the controversy that developed. The 1951 journal (p 95) calls the publications "wholly unconstructive to the building of the kingdom of God through the Evangelical United Brethren Church" and asks for a careful study of recent and

future materials. In 1952 (p 98), a formal investigation is initiated. The 1954 journal (pp 75-76) includes a resolution condemning his attacks on the "personal integrity, doctrinal fidelity, Christian sincerity and denominational loyalty" of certain leaders and his circulation of a ballot requesting a vote on a hypothetical merger with the Methodist Church; the resolution disqualified him for annual conference appointment and declared him to be "located." While C.H. Bankes requested a formal trial concerning his beliefs, the conference decided the complaints against him were not a matter of doctrine or theology. The 1955 journal (pp 42-43,52-55) contains the final resolution of the matter - - by a vote of 113-0 it was resolved that "his license and ordination paper be annulled and surrendered... in accordance with paragraph 524 of the Book of Discipline and that his name be and hereby is removed from the ministerial roll of the Central Pennsylvania Conference."

7. The "Centennial Celebration of Faith" booklet prepared in 1993 by St. Mark's UM of Havice Valley, for example, notes that that rural church was supplied faithfully by the Evangelical Association 1893-1922. After the re-merger, however, the congregation was left without a pastor. In 1924 the congregation invited the Evangelical pastor from Burnham to preach once every four weeks -- an arrangement that appears to have continued until 1945, although there were times when the church may have been closed. In addition, St. Mark's sister congregation Salem in the New Lancaster Valley suffered a similar fate. As if to add insult to injury, both congregations are completely ignored in the 1939 History of the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

8. This was the last session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association. The first session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church meeting the following week in York clearly controlled the bulk of the work, and the following year those churches from Central Pennsylvania remaining in the Association became the Williamsport District of the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association.

9. Originally a member of the Richfield Evangelical Church, Edwin E. Dunkleberger (1888-1959) was granted a license as a preacher on trial at the 1923 annual session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Because that local congregation was small, many of its members found additional fellowship with the United Brethren congregation across the road which eventually purchased the Evangelical building and "absorbed" most of its members. And so E.E. Dunkleberger entered the ministry of the Allegheny Conference of United Brethren Church, retiring from the active ministry in 1946. By 1947, the Evangelical - United Brethren merger had taken place, the Allegheny Conference was EUB, and Rev. Dunkleberger began serving area Central Pennsylvania Conference Churches from his retirement home: Port Trevorton, 1947-48; Penn's Creek, 1948-51; Middleburg, 1951-52; Mifflin 1952-55. When the Allegheny Conference was disbanded in 1952, Rev. Dunkleberger and the area's former United Brethren churches were formally accepted into the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Exactly how he came across the record book while supplying the Port Trevorton Charge, and why the book was not used before or after that single entry, remain a mystery.