

EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church, I present volume XIX of THE CHRONICLE. For nineteen years, the society has produced a mix of scholarly, entertaining, informative and inspiring stories of United Methodism – all united by a common theme. This volume continues that tradition.

This year's unifying theme "Intersecting History" tells the stories of persons who may not be well-known, but whose United Methodist faith experience played a role behind the scenes and/or had contact with persons or situations of significance. The cover photograph of United Brethren layman Hinkey Haines from Red Lion, York County, with his more famous friend sets the stage for the entire volume. The articles are arranged in chronological order, according to the significant person or situation with which they intersect.

The first article centers on Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Although hopefully well-known to our readers, he clearly labored in the shadows of his older brother John. Behind the scenes, however, the words of his hymn texts have probably shaped United Methodist theology and helped spread United Methodism at least as much as the sermons of his more prominent sibling. Last year marked the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley. *The Chronicle* thanks Charles Yrigoyen for permission to reprint in this format the presentations he made at last year's Annual Conference in celebration of that anniversary. Preparing the article for publication, I was re-impressed with the significant content in the hymns of Charles Wesley and the casualness with which we tend to parrot the words as we sing from the hymnal.

The second article tells, in his own words, the story of James Reiley (1784-1841). Reiley was born the same year as the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the two of them grew up together. He had personal contact with the first three bishops of the denomination (Francis Asbury, William McKendree, and Robert Roberts), ministered during Methodism's formative years, was a true pioneer in establishing the church in Central Pennsylvania, and left a legacy of descendants to carry on the work. An unexpected bonus within the Reiley document is his surprising and mysterious commentary on Jacob Gruber, one of the more significant ministerial figures within Central Pennsylvania Methodism.

The next article developed from an 1827 manuscript letter purchased at auction in 2007 by the Central Pennsylvania Conference archives. The author of the letter, James M. Hanson, was a ministerial member of the Baltimore Conference, which then included the bulk of Central Pennsylvania. He intersected history by being thrust into the ecclesiastical maneuvering and intrigue that led to the formation of the Methodist Protestant denomination. While it is unknown where the letter has been for the past 180 years, *The Chronicle* is pleased to be able to use this volume to reveal the existence and contents of this significant letter to all United Methodism.

The article on Edmund W. Kirby is the culmination of years of research by Jon E. Noring of South Jordan UT on the fascinating story of his wife's paternal great-great-grandfather. While there are still many unanswered questions, and the research is on-going, *The Chronicle* thanks Mr. Noring for sharing the story in its present form. The significant events with which E.W. Kirby intersected include the holiness camp meeting movement and the split within the Methodist Protestant Church.

The next article is similar to the J.M. Hanson one in that it developed from an item (a 1902 "wanted" poster!) purchased at auction, and similar to the E.W. Kirby one in that it involves filling in the story of someone who left the Methodist ministry under less than ideal circumstances. The family information on Joseph A. Bennett was supplied by Lovette Langille of Wilmington DE, who had been searching for years to learn the full story and the fate of the minister who was the father of the woman married to her grandfather. *The Chronicle* is grateful to Ms. Langille for permission to incorporate the fruits of her research into this article. Considering the stories of the descendants of Rev. Bennett, some of whom the editor has had the privilege of meeting personally, the significant and influential Methodist with whom our subject had contact may well have been Mrs. Bennett – but I don't want to spoil the ending of this amazing tale.

The cover story article on Hinkey Haines was written by James M.O. Loyer of Red Lion, York County – the hometown of the article's subject. Hinkey was a quiet United Brethren layman whose accomplishments in both amateur and professional sports almost defy belief – and yet he is little known beyond his native environs. For starters, he's the only athlete in history to play on a championship team in both the World Series and the NFL – and in one case he was a legitimate superstar for the team. The article was prepared from a presentation that Mr. Loyer has given to various groups and on regional television, and that he gives each semester at the local high school to a senior elective class on media, society and American sports.

The final article in this volume on "Intersecting History" is the powerful story of one person's personal experiences in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. Rev. Dr. Richard A. Hughes is a member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference and the M.B. Rich Professor of Religion at Lycoming College in Williamsport PA. The material in this article was delivered at Lycoming College as the Martin Luther King Holiday presentation in January 2006 and as the keynote presentation at the May 2007 annual meeting of the Conference Historical Society. *The Chronicle* appreciates the opportunity to include this moving and personal story as the finale to this year's collection of articles on our theme.