

What Ever Happened to... John Franklin Craul

John Franklin Craul appears only once in the journals of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association. On March 2, 1882, the annual conference meeting at St. Paul's¹ church in Carlisle granted a license to "J.F. Craul." He is not further identified, he never received an appointment, and there is no further record in the conference journals of any involvement with the Evangelical Association. This was not an uncommon occurrence, and there are many such persons whose names appear but once – mostly persons who had aspirations for the itinerancy but never followed through, or persons who operated as local pastors and as such were responsible only to a local charge conference and not to the annual conference.

It so happens that J.F. Craul was of solid Evangelical heritage, gave great service both to the Evangelical Association and to United Methodism, is perhaps the most noted individual appearing in that 1882 journal, and is buried in the cemetery of one of the churches of the Susquehanna Conference – but the name "John Franklin Craul" is not recognized today by even the most diligent United Methodist scholars and does not even appear in the records of the cemetery in which he is buried. This is his story.

Family Background

John Franklin Craul was born November 1, 1857, in Kralltown, York County PA. His father Daniel Craul (1827-1904) was a miller, farmer and brick manufacturer. Daniel was the son of John Crowl (1794-1862) and Katherine Slothour (1802-1863) of Alpine, a small community near the southeast corner of the present Pinchot State Park. His mother Sarah Ann Jacobs (1830-1901) was the daughter of Daniel Jacobs (1800-1873) and Catherine Zeigler (1810-1885) of Rossville, the community at the crossroads near the northwest corner of Pinchot State Park.

¹ Another article could be written about "What ever happened to... the Carlisle St. Paul's church of the Evangelical Association." This building was erected on West Lowther Street in 1870, but the congregation was forced to abandon it when they sided with the United Evangelical Church during the denomination's 1894 split. The Evangelical Association, which owned the building but had no viable congregation, sold the structure to the First Church of God, which used it until their new building was completed in the 1970's. The building was then razed and the property is now the city parking lot across from the old fire hall. The Evangelical congregation meanwhile re-organized under the name First United Evangelical Church and dedicated a new building on East North Street in 1897. That former Evangelical congregation eventually became the First United Methodist Church and continued until 2013 when it united with the Grace (former United Brethren) and Allison (former Methodist) congregations to form the present Carlisle United Methodist Church.

Each of these families was active in the Evangelical Association, as indicated by the lists of missionary contributors published in the conference journals. The Evangelical church at Kralltown was part of the Dillsburg circuit, where the name Daniel Craul appears as a regular contributor. The Evangelical churches surrounding the present Pinchot State Park were part of the Lewisberry circuit, where many persons surnamed Jacobs and Slothower appear as consistent givers.

Daniel Craul seems to have been especially prominent in the Kralltown church, as his name is often the first one listed in the conference missionary reports. And apparently his prominence was accompanied by an exemplary Christian life – for not only did his son John Franklin Craul develop into the subject of this article, but his daughter Anna C. Crowell (1874-1966) was the wife of Evangelical preacher Albert F. Weaver (1878-1955).

By now the reader has undoubtedly noticed the variant spellings of the family surname – which also includes Krall, the namesake of Kralltown. While the Evangelical church at Kralltown had no cemetery, the one a few miles south at Red Mount did – and the tombstones there include each of those surnames: Krall, Crowl, Craul and Crowell.

Early Education

John Franklin Craul matriculated through the one-room school in Kralltown, at which point it was obvious that he had both the interest and the ability that qualified him for further education. In 1875, at the age of 17, Craul enrolled at Union Seminary,² the Evangelical educational institution of the Central Pennsylvania Conference located at New Berlin, Union County PA, to prepare himself for a regular four-year college. He attended Dartmouth College in Hanover NH 1878-80 and entered Yale University as a sophomore in 1880. It was at this time that he changed the spelling of his surname from Craul to Crowell.

Crowell graduated from Yale in 1883 and became the principal at Schuylkill Seminary,³ the Evangelical educational institution of the East

² Established in New Berlin in 1856, Union Seminary was the first enduring educational institution of the Evangelical Association. Part of the United Evangelical Church during the 1894-1922 denominational split, it merged into Albright College, then located in Myerstown PA, in 1902. It was not a theological school, but a college preparatory school. The entire 2015 issue of *The Chronicle* is devoted to the 1875-76 diary of a Union Seminary student and gives insight into the institution. John Franklin Craul is mentioned several times in the diary.

³ Schuylkill Seminary was founded in Reading in 1881, relocated to Fredericksburg in 1886, and returned to Reading in 1902. It remained with the Evangelical Association during the 1894-1922 denominational split and united with its counterpart in the United Evangelical Church in 1928 to form the present Albright College in Reading. John Franklin Crowell was one of the main

Pennsylvania Conference located at Reading, Berks County PA. After one year he returned to Yale for more education, attending the divinity and graduate schools 1884-86. He then returned to being the principal at Schuylkill Seminary, now located in Fredericksburg, Lebanon County PA. But after one year at that post, in 1887, Crowell was given an opportunity that would broaden his horizons beyond measure.

Trinity College

In 1838, Methodists and Quakers in rural Randolph County NC organized a one room school which very quickly became a credible academic endeavor. It was chartered by the state as an “institute” in 1841 and in 1851 as a four-year degree-granting normal school. In 1859 the institution formally affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church South and adopted the name Trinity College. In 1887, however, that school found itself at a major crossroad.

The poverty of war and reconstruction had dealt a heavy blow to private higher education in the South. Competition from the newly formed state institutions – the Agricultural and Mechanical College in Raleigh (now North Carolina State University), the Normal and Industrial College for Women (now UNC-Greensboro), and several teacher-training institutions scattered across the state – made the situation even more dire. Following the death of the man who had led Trinity College for the past forty years, the school was saved from extinction by three wealthy businessmen – but it was clear that the institution’s ultimate fate would be determined by whomever the trustees selected to be the next president.

The following paragraphs from an article⁴ about the history of Duke University relate what happened next.

In selecting a new president for Trinity, the Methodists, one perceptive observer noted, had to choose between the traditional path of "a favorite clergyman of proved piety and conservatism, or a young man trained in the study of economic and social needs of the day." Perhaps to the surprise of many, the selection committee took the chance of a new direction.

The trustees offered the presidency to Crowell, a young man aged 29 with scant experience, who was a northerner by birth and training and, although a minister, not a Methodist. The unlikely candidate was the boxing partner at Yale of Horace Williams of Chapel Hill who recommended him to his father-in-law, Julian S. Carr, chairman of the trustee search committee.

speakers at that 1928 event. Having no children, and always holding Albright College and its predecessors in high esteem, he left the bulk of his estate to that institution – where today he is memorialized by Crowell Hall.

⁴ <http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/uarchives/history/articles/crowell>

While ordained in the Evangelical Church, his interests were in the study of the relatively new disciplines of economics and sociology. Crowell's first publication, a copy of which he mailed to Carr, was a study of the rapidly-growing industrial employment of children published in the *Andover Review* in 1885. The farsighted trustees saw in Crowell the type of progressive educator that was needed to lead the college in a new era.

Crowell first saw Trinity when he began his presidency at Commencement exercises in 1887. In truth, he confided in his diary, he almost resigned and returned north. However, the impression he made was positive. One gentleman liked him because 'he didn't try to tell them everything he knew.' One thing he wisely did not tell immediately was that he noticed incorrect Latin on the college seal presented to him as his badge of office.

President Crowell immediately set out to establish a new curriculum at Trinity. ...to replace the 19th century model based on memorization with the developing German university model of learning based on research and independent thought. Recitations continued where mastery of details were necessary but oral and written examinations on general principles greatly increased. Investigations in primary sources such as public laws and documents, journals and newspapers were required and the practices of note taking, classroom discussion, and collateral reading became commonplace.

To support the new emphasis on research Crowell persuaded the competitive debating societies to merge their separate closed libraries into the college's first general library. Crowell personally catalogued the books and served selected hours as reference librarian to encourage and instruct the students in proper research methods.

The lively academic activity resulted in increased visiting lecturers and public discussion of current topics including the publication of a series of pamphlets as Trinity College Publications which often addressed issues before the state legislature. The students began their own literary magazine, *The Archive*, credited today as the second oldest such publication in the country. Other student initiatives included the founding of a Trinity College Historical Society which gave impetus to the beginning of a manuscript collection in the library and a select honorary society called 9019, a precursor of Phi Beta Kappa.

All of Crowell's emphasis was not academic. He strongly believed in physical fitness and he encouraged intramural competition in baseball, tennis, and lacrosse. When students sought his assistance in beginning intercollegiate competition in football he readily agreed, actually coaching the team for several years. Crowell had detected an economic and geographic division on campus between eastern and up-country or supposed richer and poorer students. He seized upon football as the best way to unite the student body as well as a way to challenge the prestige of the state university in Chapel Hill. When Trinity triumphed over UNC 16-0 in their first football encounter on Thanksgiving Day in 1888, Crowell, the college community, and its alumni basked in the attention given them by the state's press.

Duke University

But Crowell's place in United Methodist history was assured by the bold new direction he took for Trinity College in 1891. He had seen what had

happened at Schuylkill Seminary when it moved (between his administrations, during his years of further study at Yale) from urban Reading to rural Fredericksburg, and became convinced that a progressive institution of higher education belonged in a progressive urban area. He convinced a majority of the trustees to relocate Trinity College into an urban setting. While Raleigh was originally the leading contender for the new site, Crowell was instrumental in securing land and finances in the city of Durham. The land was provided by his boxing-partner's father-in-law Julian S. Carr, and the financial backing came from Washington Duke⁵ – in whose honor the institution was later re-named Duke University.

And so it was a young Evangelical visionary from Kralltown PA who presided over the transformation of Methodism's little-known Trinity College in Randolph County NC into Duke University – one of the United Methodism's most prestigious institutions for medical research, theological education and scholarly studies in a wide variety of disciplines. Crowell served the school at Durham for three years before resigning in 1894, having served as president at Trinity-Duke for a total of seven years.



Craul Family Homestead – Creek Road, Kralltown⁶

⁵ Washington Duke (1820-1905) was born and raised in North Carolina and served in the Confederate Navy during the Civil War – but he was not a typical Southerner. He vigorously opposed slavery and reportedly only ever owned one slave – a female he purchased for the express purpose of immediately setting her free. In 1896 he gave Trinity College another substantial gift on the condition that it open its doors to women. Trinity College was officially re-named Duke University in 1924.

⁶ The stone above the two middle windows reads “Built by Daniel and Sarah Craul – 1864.”

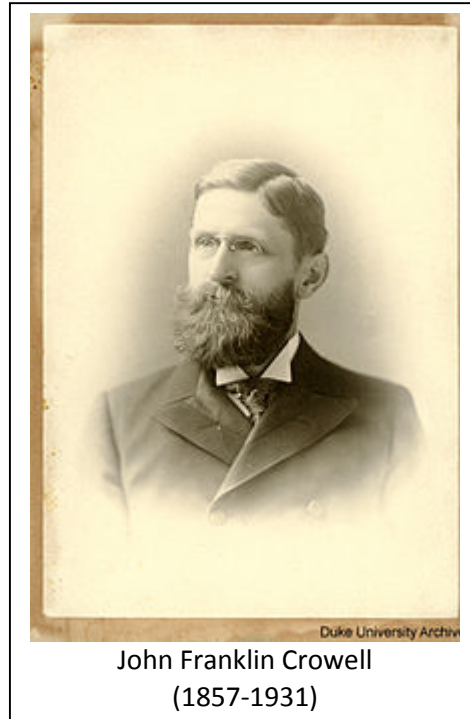
Later Careers

At 36 years of age, John Franklin Crowell was still a young man when he left Durham. While not specifically connected with United Methodism, his subsequent studies and careers reveal the breadth and depth of his interests and abilities. As a detailed analysis of those years is beyond the purpose of this article, they are summarized as follows.

- 1894-95 graduate work at Columbia University, New York NY (where he earned a PhD in 1897)
- 1895-97 professor of economics and sociology (and head of the department) at Smith College, Northampton MA
- 1897-98 studies at the University of Berlin in Germany
- 1898-99 superintendent, A.C. Clark Neighborhood House, New York NY
- 1899-00 expert agent, U.S. Industrial Commission
- 1900-04 expert on international commerce, U.S. Bureau of Statistics
- 1904-06 director of international correspondence, George Washington University
- 1906-15 associate editor, Wall Street Journal
- 1915-17 executive director, Chamber of Commerce for the State of New York
- 1917-19 financial statistician, U.S. Internal Revenue Office
- 1919-25 director, World Market Institute of New York

Following his retirement in 1925, Crowell resided in northern New Jersey. He was married June 28, 1887, in Reading PA to Laura K. Getz – who died three days short of their first anniversary on June 25, 1888. He married a second time on April 23, 1891, in Philadelphia PA, to Caroline H. Pascoe. There were no children from either marriage.

John Franklin Crowell died August 6, 1931, in East Orange NJ. He and his second wife are buried, along with his parents and his sister and brother-in-law and many other relatives, in the Red Mount United Methodist Cemetery near Kralltown.



John Franklin Crowell
(1857-1931)