

## **B.F. Campbell (1868-1931)**

What might arguably be called the most important “passing the torch” occurs when the Christian faith is handed down within the home from one generation to another. Benjamin F. Campbell was a Methodist evangelist who saw the Christian faith modeled by his parents and devoted his life and talents to sharing the gospel across central and northeast Pennsylvania and beyond. His quiet yet solid evangelistic techniques earned him respect wherever he ministered, and his lack of enduring notoriety or fame speaks to the fact he always placed the emphasis on his Savior and not himself.

B.F. Campbell first came to the attention of the editor of *The Chronicle* in the summer of 2016 when Beverly Stone of Fredericksburg VA and Lois Watts of Green Acres FL donated gospel songbooks and other materials from evangelistic campaigns to the conference archives in memory of their mother Jean Ruth Pugh of Carbondale PA. Mrs. Pugh had treasured these items, and her daughters wanted to make certain they would find a home where they would be preserved and appreciated. That very act is also indicative of the Christian faith being handed down within the home from one generation to another.

Included in the collection of Mrs. Pugh was a 20-page booklet, copyrighted in 1908, containing eight new gospel songs “published and for sale by evangelist B.F. Campbell of Catasauqua PA.” The item originally sold for ten cents and included the following note of explanation.

*This little book is issued as a suitable souvenir of my revival meetings.*

*May these songs bless and find a place in every heart.*

*The Chronicle* considers it privilege to tell the story behind this booklet and B.F. Campbell. Evangelist Campbell was passed the torch in the informal setting of a devout Christian home and then committed himself to passing the torch in more deliberate settings.

### **Parentage**

Benjamin Franklin Campbell was born September 13, 1868, in Catasauqua, Lehigh County PA, to Arthur M. Campbell (1833-1904) and Sarah Ann Swartz Campbell (1836-1912). The following obituary<sup>1</sup> for Arthur gives insight into the Campbell family and reveals the depth of the respect within the community for the Christian witness of the father.

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<sup>1</sup> *Allentown Leader* 10/14/1904, page 6

## DEATH OF ARTHUR CAMPBELL

## OLD AND HIGHLY RESPECTED CITIZEN OF CATASAUQUA PASSES AWAY

Arthur M. Campbell, an old and highly-respected citizen of Catasauqua, died shortly after 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon at his home, No. 308 Walnut Street, that place, aged 70 years.

Last Saturday he had a holiday on account of St. Luke's excursion to Glen Onoko<sup>2</sup> and during the day he worked about his garden. It is believed he caught a cold at that time. Sunday he began to complain of pain on his chest and pneumonia developed. Although he was in the best of attention he grew worse rapidly until the end. As his illness became alarming his family was called to his bedside. His death was a great shock to his many friends.

The deceased was born in Enaugh County, Ireland, and was a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Fowler Campbell, and was the youngest of 12 children. When he was about nine years old he came to America with his parents and brothers and sisters. His parents took up their residence near Mauch Chunk, where he secured his education and learned the machinist trade. Mr. Campbell came to Catasauqua at the age of 22 years and May 12, 1860, he was married to Sarah A. Swartz. The family resided in the Iron Borough since that time. The deceased was an expert mechanic and on coming to Catasauqua secured a position with the Union Foundry & Machine Co. Later he accepted the foremanship of the Lehigh Valley shops at South Easton, which position he held for a number of years. When the Davies & Thomas Works at East Catasauqua were erected, he was engaged as foreman in the machine department, which position he held until about 12 years ago, when he resigned. Mr. Campbell, however, remained in the employ of the company up to the time of his death and was always considered a faithful employee.

The deceased was a devout Christian and an ardent church worker. He was a faithful member of Grace M.E. Church, Catasauqua. For several years he was a member of the Methodist Conference and preached at various times in local pulpits. In politics he was a Republican. Although he never held office he did much for the welfare of the Iron Borough. He was a strong advocater of municipal ownership and wrote many strong articles for newspapers on the subject. There remain to mourn his loss his wife and the following children: Samuel A. Campbell, Elizabeth, N.J.; Mrs. Lydla Stodd, Plainfield, N.J.; Mrs. W.W. Blakslee, Weatherly; Rev. Benjamin F. Campbell, who is doing evangelistic work in the West; William A. Campbell, Camden, N.J.; and John T. Campbell, at home. Ten grandchildren, one brother, Archibald Campbell, Lehighton; and one sister, Mrs. Fannie Hopkins, living in England, also survive. The funeral will take place Monday at 2 p.m. from his late home. Services will be held at the house, followed by interment in Fairview Cemetery, West Catasauqua. Revs. D. P. Longsdorf and R. McIlvain will officiate.

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<sup>2</sup> Glen Onoko is a scenic area and waterfall north of Mauch Chunk [i.e., Jim Thorpe], about 25 miles north of Catasauqua. As a fund-raiser for its Training School for Nurses, St. Luke's hospital in Bethlehem organized a very popular annual fall excursion to the site.

More information about Arthur Campbell's importance in the establishment of Methodism in Catasauqua is given in the secular history of the town, where the following paragraphs describe the founding of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>3</sup>

In 1859, the pressing need was a church edifice. The little band of Christians proved their devotion to the Church of their choice by assuming the responsibility of erecting a church building. They bought a lot on Front Street above Walnut from James W. Fuller, Sr., and in June, 1859, the corner stone was laid. Rev. F.D. Egan officiated on the occasion. On a cold winter's day, December 25, 1859, the basement of the church was dedicated.

The first session of the Sunday School was held February 25, 1860, at 7:30 P.M. in the church. Arthur Campbell was the first superintendent. The Board of Trustees held their first meeting at the house of Joseph Reichard April 17, 1860. The members present were Charles Graffin, Arthur Campbell and Joseph Reichard. A charter of incorporation was granted by the Court of Lehigh County November 17, 1860.

Unfortunately, no information has come to light regarding the nature of B.F. Campbell's conversion experience, call to the ministry, or training/preparation for the ministry. It is known that by the early 1890's he was traveling as an evangelist and using his parents' Catasauqua residence as his home base. In early May 1894 he journeyed to Reading PA to participate in meetings of the Holiness Christian Association as indicated by the following excerpts from the newspaper.<sup>4</sup>

Among the latest arrivals were Rev. B.F. Campbell, of Catasauqua...

Rev. Benj. F. Campbell, who has been doing evangelistic work in St. Clair [Schuylkill County PA] the past 10 days, conducted the afternoon services. He only recently returned from Florida, where he was engaged in similar work.

He is a young man and an earnest worker.

The nature of Campbell's previous relationship, if any, to the Holiness Christian Association is unclear.

### **Early Pastoral Ministry**

At the denomination's May 1894 annual conference B.F. Campbell accepted the pastorate at Mt. Zion church at Sixth and Parker Streets in Chester PA. This was a part of the small denomination known as the Heavenly Recruits<sup>5</sup> that had just changed its name to the Holiness Christian Association. A brief sketch of that denomination is given in Appendix A. It appears, however, that the denominational change of name and accompanying reorganization was not well-received at Mt. Zion, and the congregation opted to become independent. As a result, the 1895

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<sup>3</sup> *A History of Catasauqua*, by James F. Lambert and Henry J. Reinhard, 1914, page 169.

<sup>4</sup> *Reading Eagle* 5/5/1894, page 3.

<sup>5</sup> "Heavenly Recruits" may seem like a strange name for a denomination, but it was patterned after the "Salvation Army." The name was used for over ten years for its churches and camp meetings – and accepted and recognized by the public of the day.

denominational conference suspended Campbell from the ministry as reported in the following article.<sup>6</sup>

#### SUSPENDED FROM THE MINISTRY.

Mr. Campbell Was a Heavenly Recruit and Is Said to Have Started a Revolt

Rev. B. F. Campbell, pastor of Mt. Zion Church at Chester, and until recently a resident of Catasauqua, was suspended yesterday by a committee appointed by Presiding Elder J. Trumbauer. The suspension stands until the meeting of conference next January. He was charged with disloyalty to the Holiness Christian Association, and was invited to be present at the meeting, but did not appear. The witnesses were Presiding Elder Trumbauer and William Wilson, the latter a member of Mt. Zion Church.

Campbell was charged with encouraging revolt from the association, stating, it is said, that if Mt. Zion Church would split and resume the title of Heavenly Recruits he would withdraw from the association and become the church's pastor as a Heavenly Recruit. The trouble arose over the change of name from Heavenly Recruits to Holiness Christian Association at the last conference. No opposition was made, but later Mt. Zion refused to accept the change, as the Heavenly Recruits had a charter and the Holiness Christian Association had not. By the action of the committee, Mr. Campbell is enjoined from all the functions of the church.

B.F. Campbell continued to serve Mt. Zion church in Chester for at least two more years and he submitted the following reply<sup>7</sup> after an article similar to the one above appeared following the denomination's January 1896 conference.

#### THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

Articles under this head are printed on the responsibility of the contributor.

#### MR. CAMPBELL EXPLAINS MATTERS

To the Editor of *The Leader*:

A copy of yesterday's *Leader* lies before me, and I notice what the Holiness Christian Association has done. I have been expelled for disloyalty and, as their committee puts it, "for prejudicing the minds of members of the annual conference, by writing letters," etc. Church fights are always to be regretted, and especially when they are dragged into print, as the cause of Christ suffers immense mischief thereby. But these things must of necessity come. The Pharisees charged Christ with being in league with the devil and vile taunts were slung at Him, but these things never moved Him. I stand charged with disloyalty to a conference body.

I have no unkind words to say about any of the men connected with the Holiness Christian Association. God knows all things. I do not believe in fighting with carnal weapons. I simply wish to say that Mt. Zion Church, of which I am pastor, decided by a majority vote of its lay members on April 26 last to throw off the yoke of bondage and become an independent church. This decision was a very wise one, as the year 1895 has disclosed. The report

<sup>6</sup> *The Allentown Daily Leader*, 5/7/1895, page 1.

<sup>7</sup> *The Allentown Daily Leader*, 2/1/1896, page 1.

of our church treasurer was the best ever given. Material and spiritual progress has resulted since the April decision. We expect greater things during 1896 than ever before.

The expulsion referred to in yesterday's Leader means nothing as regards my relations to Mt. Zion Church. I am the legal and lawful pastor of said church and am well able to take care of myself and the best interests of the people whom I serve. Your article in Thursday's paper places me in a wrong position before that public. By implication your readers will conclude that I have been expelled from the church of which I am pastor. The Holiness Christian Association, consisting of J. Trumbauer,<sup>8</sup> T.J.J. Wright,<sup>9</sup> C. W. Ruth<sup>10</sup> and others, which met in annual conference at Reading this week, have no legal jurisdiction over Mt. Zion Church or her pastor. Mt. Zion declared herself an independent church on April 26, 1895, and in proper form decided to stand alone on the congregational system.

The readers of your valuable paper conclude from the way in which you published matters that I have been thrown out into the cold, when quite the reverse is true. I am the lawful and legal pastor of the Mt. Zion Church, Chester, Pa., chartered under the state laws of Pennsylvania, and no conference body anywhere has power to expel me from a church over which it has no legal sway. The Reading Conference simply wanted to get even with me, because I stood by my people in their struggle for right, hence why they "without a dissenting voice" voted to expel me from their conference. One year ago this same small body was without a corporate existence.

At that time they met in Mt. Zion Church, this city, in annual conference the same as they met in the city of Reading, this week. J. Trumbauer, my predecessor, left my people with a floating debt of nearly \$500 aside from a mortgage of \$4500. The board of trustees have fully vindicated me against the charge of disloyalty upon which the Reading Conference expelled me. As for influencing members I confess that I wrote several letters all in a spirit of love to a few innocent ones before the Reading conference met this week, warning them against a clique which I knew was running things pretty generally.

Very respectfully yours,

B. F. CAMPBELL, Pastor Mt. Zion Church, Chester, Pa.

Exactly when Campbell resigned at Mt. Zion is not known, but in 1901 and 1902 B.F. Campbell is listed by the Wilmington Conference of the Methodist

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<sup>8</sup> Jonas R. Trumbauer (1848-1920) is further mentioned in Appendix A. He was from Lehigh County and is buried there.

<sup>9</sup> T.J.J. Wright (?-1954) was an itinerant pastor in the Holiness Christian denomination. He transferred to the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1901, later served as a district superintendent, and has a memoir in the 1954 journal of the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Church.

<sup>10</sup> Christian Wismer Ruth (1865-1941) is further mentioned in Appendix A. He was born in Bucks County PA, died in Kentucky and is buried in California.

Episcopal Church as living in Dover DE and supplying the Armory ME church.<sup>11</sup> In 1902 it was reported that, “The Dover District will present three candidates for admission on trial: B.F. Campbell, a supply at Armory Church, Dover...”<sup>12</sup> For some reason Campbell was never formally admitted on trial, and he returned to doing independent evangelistic work. He appears to have ended his relationship with the Wilmington Conference on friendly terms, however, as a 1905 news item states that, “Rev. B.F. Campbell, a former pastor of Armory M.E. Church, is visiting here,”<sup>13</sup> and he continued to operate primarily in Methodist circles – or in union situations where there was Methodist involvement.

### **Evangelistic Ministry**

The evangelistic ministry of B.F. Campbell is well-documented by newspaper accounts, local church histories and personal diaries/testimonies. *The Chronicle* summarizes this ministry by presenting in chronological order several newspaper accounts that relate to the Susquehanna Conference and/or give particular insight.

B.F. Campbell did the majority of his evangelistic work in Methodist churches and camp meetings, and the reports were typically quite favorable.

ALTOONA, PA – The fall and winter revival campaign at Fifth Avenue Church gave excellent results. Decision Day in the Sunday School; preaching, with altar services for four weeks; a number of church certificates received, and a large class of baptized children formed for religious instruction have made substantial additions to the membership. The pastor, H.C. Pardoe, was aided in the work by city pastors and by the Rev. B.F. Campbell, of Catasauqua, PA.  
*The Christian Advocate* 3/9/1905, page 384

Note that in 1905 Campbell was continuing to operate out of the family home in Catasauqua.

As noted in his father’s 1904 obituary, Campbell was “doing evangelistic work in the West” at the time. While the geographic extent of his ministry is not known, and there was an earlier reference to evangelistic work in Florida, most of preaching occurred in Pennsylvania and its adjacent states. His frequent mention on community-news pages indicates local respect and popularity, and this particular article indicates a willingness to step in whenever and wherever needed.

Rev. B.F. Campbell is spending a week’s vacation with his mother, Mrs. Arthur M. Campbell, Walnut Street. He will leave Saturday for Chestertown. N.Y., where he will preach during the illness of the regular pastor.  
*Allentown Leader* 5/31/1906, page 1

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<sup>11</sup> Armory ME church was a relatively small congregation organized in 1891 by people who left the larger Wesley Church (just down the street) after some disagreement there. It closed in 1960 with the remaining members joining Wesley.

<sup>12</sup> *Wilmington News Journal*, 3/8/1902, page 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Wilmington News Journal*, 12/29/1905, page 8.

Now independent, the Island Grove camp meeting in Juniata County was once part of the local Evangelical charge. The Evangelical Church, now within United Methodism, may well have been Campbell's second-most-often denomination of choice. This article speaks well of Campbell's rapport within his home territory.

EVANGELIST CAMPBELL WELCOME VISITOR HERE

Rev. B.F. Campbell, of Weatherly, and formerly of Catasauqua, stopped off in town on his way home from Island Grove camp meeting, Mexico, Juniata County, where he had charge of the evangelistic services during the meeting. He visited Waldheim Park last evening, and Beulah Park this morning, shaking hands with his friends and renewing fellowships. Rev. Mr. Campbell will be at Ocean Grove, N.J., August 18 to September 1.

*Allentown Leader* 8/14/1913, page 7

Waldheim Park was an Evangelical camp Meeting in Allentown, and Beulah Park was a holiness camp meeting in nearby Rittersville. Note that by 1913 Campbell was operating out of Weatherly PA.

Patterson Grove is another camp meeting within the Susquehanna Conference that is still operating. Although now independent, it still celebrates its historic Methodist roots. Doris Wiant Harvey's 1968 centennial history, page 30, of that institution indicates the unique role Campbell played in its history.

In 1915 the trustees for the first time employed an evangelist for camp meeting. This evangelist was the Rev. B. F. Campbell, of Weatherly, Pa., who wrote in the Record Book, "The world is my parish." Thenceforth an evangelist was a regular feature of camp meeting at Patterson Grove; only once thereafter – in 1936 – did the trustees revert to the original practice of using some 20 or more ministers instead.

Immediately following that Patterson Grove Methodist camp meeting, the following advertisement for Campbell's services appeared in the denomination's magazine.

EVANGELIST

ATTENTION PASTORS – Arrange for a series of union revival meetings summer of 1916-17. City, town or village. Twenty-two years of successful evangelism. Methods safe, sane scriptural; free from ranting, sarcasm and other objectionable whims. True to Bible doctrines. Loyal and brotherly. Testimonials, terms, dates, etc., upon request. The Rev. B.F. Campbell, Weatherly PA

*The Christian Advocate* 9/2/1915, page 1202

Ocean Grove NJ was the premier camp meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While it is unclear whether Campbell was ever a featured speaker on the main platform there, he regularly spent a significant portion of his summers there to refresh himself and to speak at smaller camp meetings in the area. Again, the following front-page article reveals the respect he commanded within the Christian community.

## REV B.F. CAMPBELL HERE FOR TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS

Rev. B.F. Campbell, a well-known evangelist of Allentown, Pa., formerly of Catasauqua and Weatherly in that State, arrived in Ocean Grove last Saturday, and is at the LaPierre hotel until after Labor Day. For twenty-eight consecutive years, Mr. Campbell has been a summer visitor to this resort.

During the season of 1919-20, Evangelist Campbell held fourteen revival campaigns in various parts of the country. He will preach at camp meetings to be held at Chatworth, Benville, Wareton, Beach Haven, Warren Grove, Seaside Park and Bay Head on Sundays July 11 and 25, and August 1,8,15,22 and 29, spending the weekdays at Ocean Grove.

*Ocean Grove Times* 7/16/1920 page 1

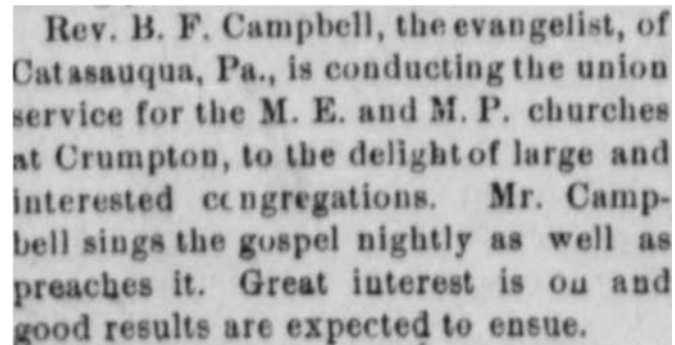
Note that as of 1920 Campbell is now operating out of Allentown. If 1920 is his twenty-eighth year at Ocean Grove, he must have started the practice in 1892 – while he was just beginning his evangelistic ministry and before his pastoral service at Chester and Dover.

B.F. Campbell's ministry in the Evangelical Church included at least one series of revival meetings at historic Kleinfeltersville – the final resting place of Evangelical founder Jacob Albright. This article indicates Campbell's willingness to become a real part of the congregations where he ministered.

Funeral services were held at Kleinfeltersville, this afternoon, over the remains of Annie Herneisen of that place. After brief rites at the house the body was taken to the Evangelical Church, where the services were continued by the pastor, the Rev. P. K. Bergman, assisted by the Rev. B. F. Campbell, of Allentown, an evangelist who is conducting services at this church at the present time. Burial was made in the adjoining cemetery.

*Lebanon Daily News* 11/17/1925

This brief survey of Campbell's evangelistic ministry closes with an undated and unidentified newspaper fragment from the Maryland State Archives – and since it identifies Campbell as being from Catasauqua, it must be from early in his career. It illustrates the fact that his evangelistic ministry extended into Maryland, that it reached into both Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant churches, and that it included a significant musical component – which leads into the next section of this article.



Rev. B. F. Campbell, the evangelist, of Catasauqua, Pa., is conducting the union service for the M. E. and M. P. churches at Crumpton, to the delight of large and interested congregations. Mr. Campbell sings the gospel nightly as well as preaches it. Great interest is shown and good results are expected to ensue.

### Musical Contributions

Although several advertisements for and newspaper accounts of B.F. Campbell's meetings note the presence of a musical component and praise his singing ability, they give inadequate credit to his talent for composing gospel tunes. In the 20-page booklet that inspired this article, for example, all eight of the gospel songs have tunes composed by Campbell.

While anyone with enough money and enough ego can self-publish his own literary and/or musical attempts, and many evangelists have done this, an item that called particular attention to this booklet was the fact that the texts for six of the eight gospel songs were provided by the noted and respected Rev. Johnson Oatman, Jr. – author of such standards as *Higher Ground*, *Count Your Blessings* and *No, Not One*. Any musician in collaboration with Oatman<sup>14</sup> surely needs to be taken seriously both musically and spiritually.

The remaining two texts in the booklet were written by Will P. Snyder,<sup>15</sup> whose best known literary work was the 1917 book *Billie Boy and I, and Other Child Verses for Adult Readers*<sup>16</sup> – which received mixed literary reviews.<sup>17</sup> Campbell also was involved in the music business. In addition to owning the copyright to his own songs, for example, he held the 1916 copyright for the gospel song “Say Amen to That” – words by Wyoming Conference pastor C. Edwin Cook and music by Mrs. Nellie Albright Weber of West Pittston.

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<sup>14</sup> Johnson Oatman, Jr., (1856-1922) was born near Medford NJ, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at the age of nineteen, and soon was licensed and ordained by that denomination – although he entered the insurance business and never actually served under appointment. He started writing gospel hymn texts in 1892, and his texts were in great demand by the leading gospel musicians of the day – Kirkpatrick, Excell, Gabriel, etc. He is credited with approximately 3,000 gospel song texts. It is likely that Oatman and Campbell became associated through their mutual interest in the Methodist camp meetings at Ocean Grove NJ.

<sup>15</sup> William Peter Snyder (1871-1922) was a prominent Methodist Episcopal layman in Ashland, Schuylkill County PA, where he was Sunday School superintendent and proprietor of a prosperous clothing store. He is also author of the words to the 1916 political song “Give Us Teddy.” His poetry was widely appreciated by the common people and published in a number of newspapers.

<sup>16</sup> A signed first edition of this book, gifted to the noted Edgar Guest, was available on the rare book market as this article was being written – with the following hand-written inscription on the front endpaper. “To Edgar A. Guest:

*When memory takes you by the hand and leads you back to childhood land,  
May Billie Boy and I come too! – We'd like to play along with you.*  
Will P. Snyder. Ashland, PA. Jan 17-20”

<sup>17</sup> *The Christian Register*, 10/11/1917, page 977, reported as follows. “These poems are very true to child life. They present sayings and ways of the little ones in phases and scenes that will be familiar to every parent. Part I gives verse in terms of the father's relation to the little children, including one that slipped out of life. In the second part the children are themselves the speakers. The poetic value is not great, but the verses are pleasing and express sentiments that are valuable because they are universal experiences.”

One interesting characteristic of the booklet is that it for each of the Oatman texts it provides the motivation behind the words – further illustrating there must have been a close connection between Oatman and Campbell. Following are reproductions of pages 12 and 13 of the booklet, which are typical of its music and spirituality.

#### JESUS NEVER TURNS A SOUL AWAY

During the Pitman Grove, N. J., Camp-meeting of 1898 a little girl of fourteen years was powerfully convicted of her sins, and in response to the invitation for an immediate surrender to Christ, knelt in front of the auditorium altar. She remained there in earnest prayer and real agony of soul. Others who had simultaneously bowed at the altar prayed through to God and received the blessing of pardon and peace. But the little girl could not grasp the promise of Jesus to save "Now." One of the workers approached the little seeker and said, "My dear little girl, *when* do you believe that Jesus will save you?" Looking up through tear-dimmed eyes and a quick change of countenance, she hopefully exclaimed, "Why—now, for Jesus never turns a soul away." Thus a simple childlike faith, exercised in Jesus, will ever bring immediate results.

# Jesus Never Turns a Soul Away.

REV. JOHNSON OATMAN, JR.

REV. B. F. CAMPBELL.

*Vigorously.*

1. Out up - on the mountains far from home, Why so long in  
 2. Hear the Sav-iour call - ing, "Come to me," Soul he's sweet - ly  
 3. Tho' your sins be red, still, sin - ner know, He can cleanse and  
 4. Come to Je - sus now, do not de - lay, Hear the in - vi -

dun - ger will ye roam? Hear the in - vi - ta - tion, "Come to - day,"  
 call - ing now for thee; He will quickly save if you o - bey,  
 make you white as snow; Come with faith and hope to him to - day,  
 ta - tion, "Come to - day," At the cross of Christ come learn to pray,

**CHORUS.**

Je - sus nev - er turns a soul a - way. Here lay down that

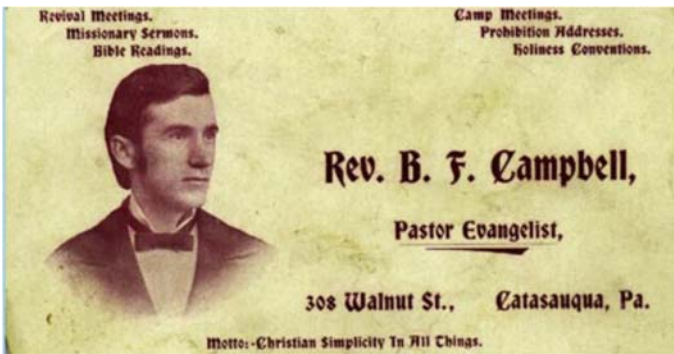
heav - y load of sin, Mercy's door is o - pen, en - ter in; From your

tru - est friend no lon - ger stray. Je - sus nev - er turns a soul a - way.

Copyright, 1908, by B. F. Campbell

### Epilogue

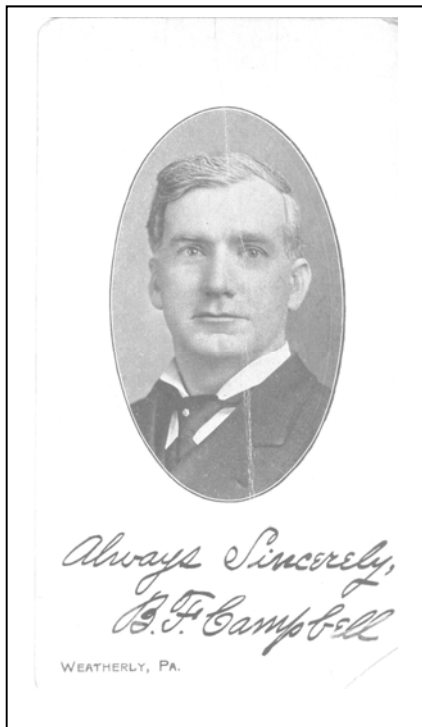
When the torch of faith transitioned from father Arthur M. Campbell to son Benjamin F. Campbell, neither could have realized the continuing transitions that would occur in the life and ministry of young B.F. – from evangelist to charge pastor and back to evangelist, from independent work to the Holiness Christian Church to the Methodist Episcopal Church and back to independent work. This Christian gentleman never married, and he gave himself whole-heartedly to the forceful yet dignified and responsible passing of the torch of faith in Jesus Christ to others



Revival Meetings  
Missionary Services  
Bible Readings  
Motto: Christian Simplicity In All Things

Camp Meetings  
Prohibition Addresses  
Holiness Conventions

family home  
308 Walnut Street  
Catasauqua PA



Fairview Cemetery  
West Catasauqua PA  
“interdenominational evangelist”

## **Appendix A. The Holiness Christian Association**

Editor's note: The early ministry of B.F. Campbell involved a denomination called the Holiness Christian Association. In this issue of *The Chronicle* dedicated to transitions, and to further better understand the personal transitions of B.F. Campbell, it is appropriate to give a brief history of the transitions of the Holiness Christian Association denomination.

The roots of the Holiness Christian Association lay in the holiness revival that occurred in the United States in the late nineteenth century. In 1882, under the leadership of L. Frank Haas,<sup>18</sup> three men and two women held street meetings in Philadelphia and in 1884 gathered the resulting converts together under the name Heavenly Recruits. The ministry spread rapidly, and missions were soon established in other communities in Pennsylvania, Indiana<sup>19</sup> and Delaware. At the 1889 annual conference in Linwood PA, resolutions were passed to establish an itinerant ministry, and Haas was elected as the first presiding elder.

By 1894, at the tenth annual conference, held in Reading PA, the group determined it had outgrown its original structure and reorganized as the Holiness Christian Association, with C.W. Ruth as the presiding elder. This action was not supported by everyone and some congregations and pastors withdrew – the church in Philadelphia continued to operate under the original name and charter, the Mt. Zion church in Chester became independent, and there may have been other defections.

At the annual session of 1896, also held in Reading PA, the denomination divided into two conferences – the Indiana Conference with Jonas Trumbauer as presiding elder, and the Pennsylvania Conference. In 1897 the first General Conference was held in Reading PA, and the denominational name was changed to the Holiness Christian Church.

In March 1908 about half of the congregations merged into the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene – and were joined later that same year by the Holiness Church of Christ on October 13, 1908, the date designated by the current Church of the Nazarene as the official founding date of that denomination. The remaining congregations declined the merger and continued as the Holiness Christian Church. In 1919 the Indiana Conference united with the Pilgrim Church to form the Pilgrim Holiness denomination, while the Pennsylvania Conference continued as the Holiness Christian Church.

In 1976 the Pennsylvania Conference of the Holiness Christian Church changed its name to the Evangelical Christian Church. In 2001 the Evangelical Christian Church merged into the Wesleyan Church. This actually re-united the former Indiana and Pennsylvania Conferences of the Holiness Christian Church, as the Wesleyan Church had

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<sup>18</sup> L. Frank Haas (1856-1953) was a converted hardware salesman from Reading PA. He and Jonas Trumbauer and C.W. Ruth were heavily involved with the Upper Milford Mennonite revival in Bucks County that give rise to the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church. See the article on Eusebius Hershey in the 2002 volume of *The Chronicle*, pages 40-46.

<sup>19</sup> Before becoming a full-time preacher/evangelist, C.W. Ruth was a printer. It was his move to Indiana in that context that spread the Heavenly Recruits movement to that state.

been formed in 1968 by the union of the Wesleyan Methodist and Pilgrim Holiness denominations. The Wesleyan Church today is headquartered in Indiana and has five colleges across the United States and Canada: Houghton, Indiana Wesleyan, Southern Wesleyan, Oklahoma Wesleyan and Kingswood University.

FOUNDERS OF THE HEAVENLY RECRUITS<sup>20</sup>



L. Frank Haas



C.W. Ruth



Jonas Trumbauer

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<sup>20</sup> More information on these three persons and the movement they began may be found in the article "Holiness Connections" by Richard E. Taylor on the Bible Fellowship Church website at <http://www.bfchistory.org/soc3!2008.htm>.