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W. A. Baldwin

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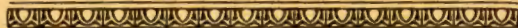
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VF Nebraska Churches

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ANGLICAN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

# HISTORY



## Churches of Christ In Nebraska

By

W. A. Baldwin

Published by The  
Nebraska Christian Missionary Society  
Lincoln, Nebraska

## THE UNFINISHED WORK

of

W. A. Baldwin

Brother Baldwin set out to write a rather complete history of the churches in Nebraska, but passed away before the work was done.

This type has been set for several years, waiting for someone to complete the work.

Now because of Government regulations relative to linotype metal, this type can not be held longer, and is being printed as is without corrections of typographical errors.

This is being done in order to preserve this valuable history for our people. It is hoped that some one will take it upon himself to complete the work in the near future.

The search for data to write even a brief history of the Churches of Christ, otherwise known as Christian churches and Disciples of Christ, in Nebraska, has led the historian into many fields. In the mind of the average person, who is not well acquainted with the teachings of our people, the different designations of our people is somewhat confusing. In the west the name "Christian" is more often used than any other, though quite often the legal name of the church when used in organization papers is "Church of Christ." There is, however, a body of people who have used the name "Christian" to the exclusion of any other, and so incorporate themselves, who are different from us in polity and doctrine in several particulars.

That we might be more accurately designated the name "Disciples" is quite commonly used in addition to the name "Christians," as both names are according to New Testament usage, and both apply to the great Head of the Church Jesus Christ. In the West, the name "Christian" was used almost exclusively and will be so used in this record for the earlier stages of our growth.

The search for materials has revealed a lack of orderly records in very many of the churches. The evangelists who were, in the most part instrumental in the work of bringing early settlers in Nebraska into groups and preaching the gospel to them and all others who would come, were more skilled in the work of proclaiming the gospel, and baptizing the converts, than in the making of permanent records in each place. And in many instances the newly chosen church officers were in-experienced and little stress was laid upon the preservation of what records were made.

David R. Dungan and Robert C. Barrow were missionaries under the American Christian Missionary Society at Cincinnati Ohio, and the co-operation meetings of the few churches in the state.

Mr. Barrow, fortunately, made frequent reports to the American society, and wrote regularly to the Christian Standard, of Cincinnati, giving a most interesting account of the work done in the state. After his death his son, Frank Barrow, collected much of this material and reproduced it practically verbatim, in a brief "Life of Robert C. Barrow." Out of the co-operation meetings above mentioned, came the Nebraska State Convention, which now is the Nebraska Christian Missionary Society. Its records, as far as they have been preserved are reliable sources of historical information.

D. R. Dungan has been appealed to for his recollections of those days, and he has generously responded. The information thus ob-



tained has been used in this historical effort. To this has been added reminiscences of many of the older members, written by request for this history, or for local church re-unions, and thus preserved.

Naturally too, the history of the settlement of Nebraska, written by various persons, has included, incidentally, something of the beginnings and progress of churches, and these have been drawn upon for this work. These have been found largely in the volumes of the State Historical Society, and some independent writings preserved by them. Yet, the time allotted to the preparation of this history is not sufficient to make full and comprehensive search.

\* Doubtless there will be disappointments because of omissions and possibly mis-statements from lack of accurate information. As the work and progress of these churches in Nebraska are still going forward, it will be germane to suggest to the church officials that they be careful to make and preserve, definite records that the following histories may be more complete and accurate. Pastors should be constantly on the alert to see that such permanent records are made and preserved.

THE FIRST SERMON\* preached to white people in the territory of Nebraska, was by a Christian preacher by the name of Foster, and whose first name may have been John. Joel Palmer made an exploratory trip across the plains to the Rocky Mountains in 1845, with a train of about forty wagons. His daily journal recites their crossing the South Platte river five or six miles above the fork where the North Platte flows into the South Platte. Weyth Townsend says the fork at the place is eight miles from the junction. The daily record shows that the wagon train arrived at that point practically 46 miles up the North Platte on June 14, 1845.

They rested the next day, and amidst the many activities mentioned was that one, Foster, a "Campbellite" preacher was holding religious services. This nickname was often applied to the people of whom we are writing, though never acknowledged by them. The natural assumption is that Mr. Foster was a preacher of the then new movement for the return to the unity in teaching and in life, of the apostolic period. The present town of Martin on the Union Pacific railroad, almost due north of Ogalala, is not far from the site of this preachment, though the latter is on the south side of the river.

THE FIRST TOWN—In 1854, Richard Brown came from Oregon, in Holt County Missouri, and settled on the site of the present town of Brownville, in Nemaha County. He acquired a farm and

set up his home. In October of the same year, Joel M. Wood, a Christian preacher, arrived in the same community, and he united with Mr. Wood in staking out a town site, which was christened

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\* The first sermon preached in Nebraska, according to Beattie's School History of Nebraska, page 178, by Moses Merrill, a Baptist minister, who was laboring among the Otoe Indians at Bellevue. This appears to have been in November 1833. He died in 1840. The Indians gave him a name that meant "The-man-who-always-spoke-the-truth."

Brownville in honor of the first settler. He became the first treasurer of the village and also built the first hotel there. Both Wood and Brown were staunch disciples and immediately the former began to preach to the settlers in and near the village. "Father" John Mullis was also associated in this work. The progress of these meetings was such that in January 1855, the church was organized, being THE FIRST REGULAR CHURCH organization in the territory.

It was not until several years later that a church building was erected. This was blown down in 1866, resulting in the scattering of the congregation for a time. The building was of brick and a part of the walls remained, and were incorporated in a building used by another religious organization. The last evangelistic meeting held in that house led by G. R. Hand and R. C. Barrow was in February 1866, in the first year of Mr. Barrow's service as a missionary evangelist of the American Christian Missionary Society and resident at Nemaha City.

Some of the members united with the London congregation, and about thirty of them held meetings in a school house four miles north of Brownville, near the residence of T. B. Edwards, who was preaching for them regularly. After Mr. Wood moved away, R. A. Hawley, and Jas. T. Connoran also preached in the town, and in November 1877 the church was revived, and they erected a frame church building 36 x 66 feet on Main street. This cost them \$2,300.00, and Chas. Rowe was the first minister in the new church. They elected Geo. Carrington and Jas. Zook, elders and T. M. Dryden, D. O. Cross, Wm. Zook and Wm. Berger deacons. There were 90 members in the church and 75 in the Sunday School in 1879. Richard Strong preached for them for a time during 1893 and 1894, closing his work on Thanksgiving day 1904. This church building burned in 1896.

E. S. Chamberlain served the church from 1897 to 1900, and in 1901 J. W. Sapp began to preach for them in an effort to revive the work. This continued until 1907, and during his long pastoral service he led them in erecting a new church building on the site of



the one that had burned. This was completed and dedicated July 19, 1903, by the state corresponding secretary, W. A. Baldwin. The cost was \$1137.00 plus donated labor, of which pastor Sapp gave a large portion. \$628.00 was needed and the brethren were not hopeful that it could be raised. But during the day it was all pledged and after an evening sermon by Freeman L. Pettit of Auburn, the building was joyfully presented to the service of God.

The church began to use student supply from Cotner in 1909 and among those serving are Bert Wilson, Frank A. Woten, Burton A. Davies, President William Oeschger, E. L. Keckley, C. W. Long, and Prof. E. E. Smith. J. W. Sapp has been on the field again since 1925 or 1926. In 1918 John G. Alber held a meeting with 38 additions.

At the 26th anniversary of the dedication of the church July 21, 1929, there were five persons present who attended the dedicatory services. Ora J. Den, J. W. Sapp, Mrs. Ella Sedoras, G. E. N. Sanders, who has been Bible School superintendent for 16 years, and Mrs. Sanders. Among those early disciples must be named Bro. Samuel Christy and Wm. Christy. The Brownville church is said to have been the first to introduce the Cradle Roll, Mrs. Sanders being superintendent. They claimed to have become the first Front Rank Bible School in the state.

This oldest of churches among all the churches in Nebraska, has an interesting history, most of it only dimly remembered. Its struggles, hopes, disappointments, its successes and victories, if all could be gathered into one story, would be practically a cross section of the work of all the churches in the state, or perhaps in any state. Its refusal to be blown away by the tornado, its rising like a Phoenix from the ashes, its indestructible courage and faith, are evidences, clear and unmistakable, of the truth of that word of the Master, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

**ROCK BLUFF**—James Connoran, an Iowa preacher, organized the church at Rock Bluff, one of the early settlements on the Missouri river about eight miles below Plattsmouth. It has long ago disappeared, but in the times of which we are writing it had perhaps as high hopes as most of its neighboring communities, of being a real city. It was incorporated as Rock Bluff City in 1858, consolidating two groups of settlers contiguous to each other. The Cass County Sentinel, was started there. A two story brick school building erected by Prof. J. D. Patterson, was virtually the first High school in the county. It had a flour mill, two general stores, Post Office, blacksmith shop and a Methodist church. It was a real rival for Platts-

mouth, which outstripped it because the railroad came into that city, leaving Rock Bluff in the country. This church organization was the second Christian church in the territory and it began in 1862. Mr. Connoran continued to preach there for about a year.

In September 1863, the church entertained the first co-operation meeting of our brotherhood in the territory. Barrow says—"Five of the six nominal churches were represented." The six that were in his mind were not named by him, and it is not easy to determine them now. They would include, doubtless, Brownville, Rock Bluff, Eikenberry school house and Plattsmouth. De Soto\*, north of Omaha might be the one without representation. D. R. Dungan and Peter Vogel preached there at times.

From an estimate made by Barrow, there were between three and four hundred disciples in the territory in July of that year.

It may be well to include the fact here that at this meeting of the representatives of the five Nebraska churches, and two Iowa churches, an appeal was drafted to the American Christian Missionary Society of Cincinnati, to lend assistance in evangelizing the rapidly settling territory. The answer came in the autumn of 1864, when J. F. Berry was sent out to labor in the new field of Nebraska. He came to Plattsmouth, but was not favorably impressed with the outlook, and returned east.

Not long afterward the Society notified David R. Dungan, then teaching school and preaching in the territory, that it would sustain him to the extent of \$500.00 per annum, with the privilege of raising \$300.00 additional pay on the field. This offer was promptly accepted, and Mr. Dungan began the work in January 1865.

Without doubt this definite aid was a source of joy to the struggling disciples. It looks very meager at this late date, but it meant continuity. There would be a permanent work done, and under the hands of a vigorous, western man, who was withal a strong gospel preacher, the cause of New Testament christianity would be pushed forward. The scattered settlements would have a common point of contact not only with one another, but also a tangible fellowship with the churches "back home." They felt themselves to be a part of the growing brotherhood in the great Mississippi valley, rather than a dissevered, helpless, frontier guard, encamped between the great, unknown prairies of the west, and the swift waters of the big and muddy Missouri.

Not long after the appointment of Mr. Dungan, and at his request, the society agreed to support yet another man on the field on the same terms. This man the Nebraska brethren could choose. In



December of 1864, Robert C. Barrow, then living at Oregon, Missouri, made what he called "A flying visit to Nebraska," preaching three evenings at Omaha and a Lord's day at Plattsmouth. At Omaha he met Richard Brown, who was then living there, Dr. Van Camp, Milan Hunt, and a young man named Williams. At Plattsmouth he met Dungan. Thus when the disciples of the state needed another man to put in the field, their thoughts seemed at once to turn to this vigorous evangelist from Missouri, and at Dungan's suggestion, they offered him the work and he accepted it, beginning July 1, 1865,

<sup>99</sup> DeSoto of that early day is now farm land, its main street planted to corn, and a farm home near the site of one of the banks. It was for a time the county seat of Washington County, and had three banks besides many other places of business. It had a population of 600 or more and about a dozen saloons. D. R. Dungan lived there for a time and preached at De Soto and a point in Iowa.

and moving to Nemaha City. Both men served for years as state evangelists, Mr. Barrow giving about twenty-five years to the service and at times being secretary of the state society.

About these two men, Dungan and Barrow, clusters most of the early history of Nebraska discipleship. They worked as a team or singly as the conditions demanded. They rode horseback, or in farm wagons, and by lighter vehicles, and in the later years of their ministry, on the trains. They forded the streams, at times wading and swimming.

Mr. Dungan records the fact that he had made river crossings by taking his buggy to pieces and transporting it in a skiff, and swimming his horse across. Of course several trips would be necessary. Mr. Barrow writes of crossing the Missouri one evening while the ice was going out, with a drunken oarsman, landing far below his home at Brownville. He walked and waded through the brush and grass to his home against a cold north wind. The exposure caused a severe illness lasting for weeks. Whatever means of travel were at hand, they accepted it willingly.

The storms of winters, and the heat of summers did not halt their work. For the most part they lodged in the homes of the brethren, or other friendly people, in some cases, where the atmosphere was not wholly friendly at the first. The sod house and dug-out were quite common and the accommodations were few and primitive. The fare was not always abundant, but generally given with cordial hospitality, and accepted by them in the same spirit.

They met much opposition, and often misrepresentation, and at times this could be met only by set debates. Mr. Dungan held 37 of such discussions and most of them in Nebraska. He afterward

spoke of them as "A military necessity."

One of the serious problems was to find suitable places for the congregations to meet regularly. Many of the infant churches came to an early demise on this account. Then, the lack of pastoral oversight, and in some cases the ministry of unworthy preachers, stifled the little congregation. Yet through many trials and discouragements, through the joys of success, and the fellowship of earnest, faithful men and women, these men wrought steadily and persistently. The Christian churches of Nebraska will ever revere their memory. They were God's ambassadors to this growing state.

From a resume of reports made by Mr. Barrow to the general society at Cincinnati, the following facts are gleaned. In his first year's service he traveled over 2,500 miles, mostly on horseback, visited several hundred families, preached 217 sermons, gained 178 souls, and organized three new congregations.

His first meeting was held at Nemaha City. He estimated that at the beginning of that year, July 1, 1865, there were between three and four hundred disciples in the territory, and about 2,000 at the end of the third year. By 1871 his reports showed the number of churches to be thirty-five.

For ten years after this date the general board gave no financial help, the work of the organization being carried on under what was known as the Louisville Plan.\* The churches in the west had to get along as well as they could with local forces. Mr. Barrow closed his work in 1887 under the state society and he then estimated the churches at 150 and the membership at 12,000 with 85 preachers in the state.

Mr. Dungan worked alone for the first half of 1865, and his work resulted in setting up three small organizations, at Cedar Creek on the Platte river east of Ashland, at Bell's Station (also spoken of as "Sheffers"), on Salt river, and at Nebraska City. When Mr. Barrow arrived the two worked for the most part, together, with occasional separate meetings, for six years.

It is no disparagement of the work of other men who labored in those early days, to say that the trails blazed by these two earnest and vigorous preachers in those years, have become the highways that lead to the doors of most of the Christian churches in south eastern Nebraska, where Christian churches are most numerous.

There are other forces seeking to plant the gospel of a United Christendom in the new territory, that was destined soon to become a sovereign state of the Union. A small group of churches in west-



ern Iowa formed a cooperation for the purpose of sending evangelists to the settlements springing up on the west bank of the Missouri river. The names of these have not been preserved. This was in 1861 and C. P. Evans, D. R. Dungan and W. A. Denton were the evangelists. Each was to have \$200.00 per year, and the rest of the living would naturally be raised on the fields served.

They confined their work to the settlements at Omaha and in the near-by territory. They carried the work as far west as Fontanelle a village in Washington County near the present town of Elkhorn. Preaching places were established at Papillion creek, 10 miles southwest of Omaha, and Ireland's grove, Bellvue, where there was an Indian mission established by the Presbyterians in 1850. A congregation had been set up at De Soto, north of Omaha. This congregation was ministered to for a long time by Dungan in connection with an Iowa Church, his residence being in Iowa.

\* The Louisville Plan, according to G. A. Hoffman, of Bloomfield, Missouri, was in substance this: "The Home missionary work was organized, from the top down, into districts. These were to organize, raise funds and do mission work. But 25 per cent of the funds raised was to go to the state work. The states were to organize, receive the 25 per cent from the districts, raise funds, and do mission work in the state. The state was to pay to the American Christian Missionary Society, 25 per cent of the funds coming into its treasury. On this 25 per cent, turned to the national society by the states, it was to live and do its work. The plan failed because the districts did not pay to the state and the state did not pay to the national society." The state of Missouri is credited by Mr. Hoffman with paying until the year 1888 'being the only state that did so.

In September of that year, 1861, Dungan and Denton held a meeting in Omaha in a store room on Douglas street. Five persons were baptized and a small organization effected. Later in the fall the cooperation in Iowa broke down, and no further support could be given for the Nebraska work.

Just when the foundations of success had been laid, and re-inforcements to the little army of evangelists would be the logical next step, then the sacrificial courage of the commissary department breaks down, and the army must retire or go hungry! How small a sum it would have taken to at least have put a Dungan, with his big bass voice, or a Charles P. Evans with his tenor tones, in charge of these few churches and kept them going. Not one of them lived thru the winter. Omaha alone survives, but not because of the cooperation.

OMAHA—In the winter of 1854-55, the first Territorial Assembly was held in Omaha. Joel M. Wood and Richard Brown of Brownville, were members of that body representing the county of Forney as Nemaha County was first called. Mr. Wood took occasion to



preach while there. Previous to this, one Ziba Brown, a Christian preacher from Iowa, had held a service and preached in a small building near the Missouri river in January 1855. C. P. Evans obtained permission to preach in the basement of the Congregational church. Alvin Saunders, sixth territorial governor, (Beattie's History P. 118) secured for the evangelists an empty store room on Douglas street where a meeting was held by Evans, Dungan and Denton. Mr. Platt Saunders and Mr. Milan Hunt, both Christians, were then residents of the village.

During the winter of 1860-61 Dr. Israel Swihart, a physician, and W. A. Denton held a series of meetings in De Soto, and re-organized the congregation that had ceased to meet. Dr. Swihart being a resident there, was able to keep the little church active for a time. Mr. Dungan preached in the Congregational church at Omaha, Rev. Reuben Gaylord being then the pastor, in May or early summer of 1861. There were eight persons present, and Mr. Dungan remarked that it was the same number that were saved in the ark.

In the fall he, with Mr. Denton, held a meeting in that church and at that time organized the church. This appears to be the first permanent organization of the Christian church in that city. Even this can hardly be said to have been permanent as the lack of a regular place of meeting and their inability to employ a regular pastor to lead them created an element of uncertainty in the work.

But for the presence of such substantial and prominent men as Governor Saunders, Richard Brown, who moved there from Brownville, David Butler, first governor of the state after its admission to the Union, who was there until the capital was moved to Lincoln, and Captain Isaac Wiles, a member of the first Nebraska legislature, who lent their support to the little church, the struggling congregation could hardly have even begun to live. During the winter of 1864-65 G. R. Hand, a scholarly preacher from Missouri, preached in the Congregational church.

During the third legislature, and the last to be held in Omaha, in 1867, D. R. Dungan was appointed chaplain of that body. His residence in Omaha made it possible for him to give much attention to the church. He led them in a building venture. A half lot was purchased on the south side of Harney street between 14th and 15th, Governor Saunders gave another half lot beside it, and also gave \$800.00 toward the building. Milan Hunt added another \$800.00. Other Subscriptions were secured, and with some aid from the American Christian Missionary Society, a house was built. It was dedicated by N. A. McConnell and a reorganization was effected December

12, 1867.

At this re-organization meeting N. A. McConnell presided. The name First Christian Church of Omaha, Nebraska, was adopted, and there were 24 persons who became the charter members. Elders and deacons were elected as follows: Elders, Milan Hunt, Alvin Saunders, Ira Van Camp. Deacons, William Stephens, S. D. Merser, and J. W. Rogers. In the May following J. W. Allen was called to the pastorate. He continued his labors until December when the death of Mrs. Allen so discouraged him that he resigned.

July 18, 1870 appears a minute of a meeting presided over by L. R. Garrett, who was pastor at that time, though during the meeting he resigned. The meeting was struggling with the matter of raising funds. The committee on enrollment composed of Stephens and Garrett, reported 60 names on the church register. This old organization is said to have disbanded in the year 1870, and rented its building to be used for business purposes. This action seems to have been due to financial embarrassment. A debt hung over the property, and the little band were, or thought they were, unable to carry it.

In the year 1878, two Christian women, Mrs. Dr. Wilcox, whose home was in Greencastle, Indiana, and Mrs. T. W. Richards, one of the former members in Omaha, arranged for B. B. Tyler, of Louisville, Kentucky, to hold a meeting. This lasted from the 17th day of July 1878 to the 19th of August, a little more than a month. The church was reorganized with 55 members. The scholarly yet plain preaching commanded the interest and respect of the people, setting the Christian church in a more favorable light. It also stirred up the zeal of those Disciples living there and brought 12 into the church by primary obedience. Only fifteen of the membership were from the old organization.

A brick house of worship, which had been formerly used by the First M. E. Church, on 17th street, was rented and services were held each Sunday morning and a prayer meeting each Wednesday night.

On the first Lord's day in December, 1878, J. W. Ingraham became their pastor, serving five years. During this time a church building was erected at 20th and Farnam streets, which was later moved to 20th and Capitol avenue and remodeled. The church continued to use this building until it was so badly damaged by a large audience gathered on Lord's day morning, during the International Missionary convention held in Omaha in 1902, that it was condemned as unsafe for use. For a time the church meetings were held in Schlitz



hall, at 16th and Harney. Then on Harney between 18th and 19th, and in a building at 17th and Douglas.

A Tabernacle was built on a lot purchased on 19th street near Farnam, which was used until the present beautiful structure was erected at 26th and Harney, under the leadership of S. D. Dutcher, in 1908.

In the building of the church houses there are usually three phases. First, to bring about in the mind of the membership and the church officers a decision to build, agree on architectural plan, and secure the site.

Second, getting advance pledges for the major amount of the probable cost, the construction of the building and the dedication, "Free of debt." The third item under this head is usually brought about by high pressure salesmanship in the person of a skilled dedicator and pledge getter.

The last phase is the one that tries the soul of preacher and congregation; that is the collection of the pledges made, and making up the inevitable shortage. Often in the enthusiasm of a happy people at last in their own house, pledges are made without much thought as to how payments can be made. The three phases are seldom carried through by one preacher. It usually requires at least three.

D. R. Dungan served the church as pastor beginning in 1867 and following is a list of men who have served the church: John W. Allen, 1870-1873. An interm of five pastorless years followed. J. W. Ingraham, 1878-1883, D. R. Lucas in 1883-1884, R. H. Ingraham, until 1886, J. H. Foye, until 1888, C. B. Noonan in 1888, A. Martin to 1890, T. E. Crambley, 1890-1896, J. M. Vawter until 1898, D. D. Burt, 1899-1900, S. T. Martin until 1902, Harry G. Hill to 1904, S. D. Dutcher, 1904-1908, J. M. Jersey, 1908-1912, A. D. Harmon, 1912-1913, Charles E. Cobbe, 1914-1922, Dr. George A. Miller, 1923 to this writing.

The church has not only maintained its regular church services, and the auxiliaries, Bible School, young people's societies, and women's organizations, it has also continued to grow healthily in numbers and influence in the city, as population increased. The work at North Side, South Omaha, Florence, Benson and Miller Park, have been largely the product of the missionary spirit of Omaha First. Its participation in the general work of the brotherhood, has been active and generous.

It has been the policy of the Nebraska Christian Missionary Society to co-operate with this church in its missionary program in the Omaha area. At this writing District Number Two of the state organization is Douglas and Sarpy counties, and the missionary work



within it is carried on under the direction of the functioning churches within the district, including Omaha First, North Side, South Side, Benson Florence and Irvington. It should be noted that the church at Council Bluffs grew out of the missionary spirit of the Omaha First.

Among the families who have been active in the history of this church, are found those of Governor Alvin Saunders, Milan Hunt, Richard Brown, A. B. Walker, W. A. DeBord, W. W. Slabaugh, E. G. Jones, James H. Taylor, Sameul Cotner, and many others. The present membership is 977.

PLATTSMOUTH—In the year 1858, Thomas Jefferson Todd and his wife, Mary, came to Nebraska settling five miles northwest of Plattsmouth, taking a homestead. Mr. Todd soon began to hold meetings in the homes and in the school houses. In May 1860 Charles P. Evans visited Plattsmouth, and held a short meeting in the home of Isaac Wiles. Neither Mr. Wiles or his wife were members of the church. At the first service T. J. Todd and a Baptist man named Gibbs, conducted the opening devotions, and as Evans was not known to the people, they were speculating where the preacher might be. His un-clerical garb and his diminutive stature did not reassure them when he was introduced as the speaker. They soon learned that though small in body, he knew the gospel and could make it plain to them. Mrs. Wiles made the good confession and was baptized in Four Mile creek.

Meetings were intermittently continued in the school house on the creek. That same spring, Mr. Todd was among those who organized a congregation at the Eikenberry school house, three miles south of Plattsmouth, when the following officers were chosen: T. J. Todd, Elder; Benjamin Jenkins, John Chandler, and Jessie Jenkins, deacons. The charter members were, besides those above named, Mrs. John Chandler, Mrs. Mary Todd, Miss Emeline Todd, Fred Todd, William Cardwell, Mrs. William Cardwell, Mrs. Nancy E. Wiles and Mrs. Elizabeth Jenkins.

The next year, 1861, James Connoran of Iowa was employed for one-fourth time as preacher, and thirteen were added during his ministry, among them Mrs. S. E. McElwain of Plattsmouth. D. R. Dungan came to Plattsmouth in 1863, and preached for the church during that year and 1864. Part of the time he served them once a month, and then on half time. It was during this ministry that Captain Isaac Wiles came into the Kingdom.

The Dungan-Parker debate\*, held in the M. E. Church in Plattsmouth in 1866, was followed by a meeting held by G. R. Hand

resulting in 18 additions. Peter Vogel was called to the pastorate and served during the years of 1867-68. The meetings were being held in the second story of a brick building on the north side of the principal street, which was also used as a school room. G. B. Mullis followed as pastor for a year, preaching half time. Twenty were added in this year, including grandma Mullis and Thomas Wiles, the latter being elected as deacon and clerk. Cyrus Alton served the church half time during 1872-75. The church had not yet owned a building, holding meetings in private houses, the court house and other available places.

In 1874 the Congregational church was purchased for \$700.00 and dedicated as the Church of Christ in Plattsmouth, by Chancellor Allan R. Benton of the state university. In 1876-77, S. B. Ross ministered to the church giving half time only. Those serving since that time included A. P. Aten, C. L. Crowther, J. K. Reed, Galaway, C. W. Nichols D. A. Youtsey, Robert M. Dungan, A. L. Zink, H. D. Thomas, Luther Moore, D. L. Dunkelberger, A. G. Hallowell, C. E. Perlee, A. J. Hargett, L. W. Scott, Walter R. Robb, George P. Clark, H. L. Grassmuck.

Two preachers have been sent out from the Plattsmouth church, and two ministers' wives, Loren M. Wiles, Guy Wingate, Ersula Wiles Erett, and Grace Wiles Finch. The church, in 1929, reported 208 members.

LONDON—One of the vigorous and active churches of those days in the 60's was at London. The last Lord's day in February, 1866, Mr. Barrow began a meeting in the Methodist meeting house there, for which the arrangements had been made by Dr. Gwin of Brownville. No Christian preacher had ever spoken there, and in the minds of many of the people the "Campbellites" were an undesirable folk. Josiah Winter, a newcomer to the neighborhood agreed to furnish lights and fuel, and the use of the house was to be free as long as the regular meetings of the Methodists were not interrupted. Lodging had been secured in the home of a good Methodist brother, Mr. Bacon, who though a little cool in his attitude, provided well for his guest. During the first week there were seven confessions, including Jeanette Harding, and several of the number were members of the Methodist church.

Leaving his appointment for Sunday night and the following week, Mr. Barrow preached at Brownville in the morning of Sunday. The

\* Mr. Dungan's opponent was Leonard Parker, a Methodist preacher with some notoriety as a debater. The subject discussed is not given, but doubtless the form of baptism was promi-



house at London was filled when he returned, but he was informed that he could not preach in the house, or in the town of London until he proved that he was not a "Runaway rebel from Missouri." He pushed his way to the platfrom and asked to be heard, and then read letters of commendation from the churches he had served. Some one then charged that he had made speeches in the interest of secession in Missouri, which he disclaimed, and urged the objecting committee to write letters to his home in Holt County Missouri for definite information. The meeting continued, and sixteen more were added during that week, and the church was organized with Josiah Winter as elder.

Barrow having an engagement at Salem for a few days, Dungan came to continue the meeting, but he was not allowed the use of the house, and Edwin Money fitted up his store house with seats as a place of worship. Letters from Missouri were received and read by Mr. Oliver P. Welch, a fair-minded member of the Methodist church, completely exonerating Mr. Barrow from the charges made. The meeting went on for four or five weeks, and the congregation numbered more than 100. A comfortable meeting house was built in 1867. D. W. Shurtlieff ministered to them for three years. Among those first members were Mr. Bacon, host to Mr. Barrow and he was found later in active connection with the church in London.

An unfortunate choice of a preacher, also from Missouri, created much dissension, but which was adjusted by a committee consisting of brethren Sprague, Black and Ervain.

In 1871 a debate between Clark Braden of Illinois, and one, W. P. Shockey, a materialist, was held in the church at London. Naturally it excited great interest. It was said of it that there were no materialists in the community before the debate and none afterward. In the spring of 1873, T. L. Cartwright, of Missouri, held a meeting there, resulting in 18 additions. As has been noted previously, the London church received some of the brethren who were members of Brownville, after the church house was blown down in that place.

"There is much unwritten history of this church, and its full story cannot now be told. No records have been found, and the chief actors have passed to their reward or moved elsewhere. But the work that church started in the lives of so many is still going on. Its members have been found in some of active Nebraska churches, and others far away. John F. Winter, a young man then, was found in mature manhood at Red Cloud, with his wife and daughter leading the work of that church. Later in Lincoln First they were among the faithful workers. Now in Whittier, California, doubtless they



will be found as diligent in the work of the Lord. Thus, no doubt, has the widening waves of influence started in that country church of far off days, gone in all directions supporting the Kingdom of God and His Christ. London is not dead, she is just out on a great work of Evangelism. This scribe remembers also the Redferns, Miss Harding, and was well acquainted with brother Bacon at Lincoln.

The year books of the Nebraska State Missionary Society, date no further back than 1892. Beginning with that year there is very little recorded of the London church. In 1898 it had a membership of 50 and a Bible School of 40 and E. C. Chamberlain, then living at Brownville, was preaching for them, and also the next year. No record of preaching appears after that date. In 1903-04 J. O. Rerfern was superintendent of the Bible school with 45 enrolled. Mrs. Redfern was correspondent. The building was valued at \$800. Since then no reports came in, and after 1911, the church was not listed. The building has been sold.

NEMAHA CITY—R. C. Barrow made his first home in Nebraska in 1865, at Nemaha City, arriving there in July. He mentions the fact that a part of the population of that time, were principally interested in gambling, drinking and horse racing. He immediately began to preach and held his first Nebraska meeting there. T. K. Hansberry, who was living at Salem, had preached there occasionally and baptized several people. Among the residents he found some splendid souls, who had not bowed the knee to the Baal of riotous wickedness. Among them were A. D. Skeen, Henry Knight, J. F. Drain, and James Argabright and their Christian families. These gave Mr. Barrow a glad welcome to the community and his field of labor. The results of that first meeting were 21 additions to those already there. In the fall of 1866 Dungan held a short meeting of about ten days, at the request of Barrow immersing four more. Dungan laconically remarked to Mr. Barrow that he could not make his sermons equal in interest to the horse races! It became seemingly impossible to plant the cause in the town, and the services were transferred to the Larkin school house about three miles south. Mr. Barrow wrote very feelingly of those faithful disciples, who, in the midst of great opposition were true to Christ and each other. Except for the church at Tecumseh he had spoken more often for them than to any other congregation, and had baptized, married and assisted in burving many of its members. The congregation re-established itself in the town sometime late in the 60's and built the first unit of the present house of worship, in 1879, dedicating

it in May 1880. It was 36x50 feet. The elders were Lew Fisher, John Fisher and James W. Argabright. Some of the older active members were David Frazier, C. P. Barker and family, August Quiller and family, and many younger people, including Mary Argabright. The only surviving charter member known now, is Richard Skeen of Auburn.

\*The list of preachers serving the church includes the following: William Shurtleiff, 1869, William Smith 1870, Barrow 1871, Thomas B. Edwards 1873, D. B. Coryell 1875 and 1877, T. L. Cartwright 1876, G. D. Mullis 1880, Charles Rowe 1881. At that time the membership was given as 120 with a Sunday School averaging 40. J. W. Sapp began to preach for them in 1903, and continued for 19 years, part of the time in connection with Brownville. In 1923 they added to the building 16x36 feet, and they now have a very good house. C. E. Hagee, who lives and preaches at Shubert, also preached at Nemaha City. The present membership is 100.

A vivid side light on the problems facing those pioneer preachers in those days, is given by Mr. Barrow. He relates that at one time when Mr. Hansberry was preaching in the old school house in Nemaha, a man filled with spirits of corn, ordered the preacher to vacate as he wanted to finish the sermon himself. Hansberry thought he was doing well enough and declined to descend. The bully lurched to the platform and was about to forcibly eject him, accompanying his actions with the usual language of those in that condition, but townsmen present laid hold on him and showed him the door, opening outwards, punctuating the movements with vigorous applications of a number ten boot. It took physical as well as spiritual courage to preach the gospel in those "good old days" before the 18th amendment was fanatically foisted on the nation.

SALEM—There were a number of disciples in the little town of Salem in 1863, among them T. K. Hansberry who settled on a farm near there in that year. John Mullis preached there at different times. There was no public building of any kind, not even a school house, available for church services. Three saloons were going strong with the usual results following those recruiting stations for the arch enemy of human souls. Naturally those of criminal intent could be found among those who were merely bent on getting drunk. About this time some of the citizens of the place desiring to free the town of this element, deliberately shot to death a desperado and murderer who was a constant menace to the lives of peaceable citizens.



Mr. Hansberry began a heroic fight against alcohol. He was unsparing in his denunciation of the whiskey sellers. Naturally those gentry consolidated against him, even to organizing a mob to put him out of the way. He won the better class to his side and within two years the saloons were driven out. Naturally this work went along with his preaching, and here too his rugged sermons won converts.

In August 1865 Mr. Barrow assisted him in a meeting with 14 additions. An organization was effected, and officers chosen. The names of some of the charter members were: Mr. Nelson, son of Elder William Nelson, Mr. Mobley, Mrs. Tisdell, Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Rising, Mrs. Kinnison and Mrs. Campbell, whose husbands did not unite with them.

Elder William Nelson, a pioneer preacher of Indiana, came to Salem in the spring of 1866 and lived with his daughter Mrs. Hadlock, then a member of the church. He preached at Salem and also at Nebraska City during the summer, though the weight of years lay heavily upon him. In October that year he fell asleep and his mortal body was laid to rest on the summit of the bluffs overlooking the Missouri river, north of Nemaha City. He labored successfully in Cass, Carroll, Howard, and Miami counties, Indiana, and baptized hundreds of confessors.

Hansberry moved to Padonia, Kansas in 1867, and the church at Salem was preacherless. Dungan, Barrow, Berry, Shurtlieff and Ran, held occasional meetings with the church until in 1871 J. F. Berry settled there. He remained two years, and the church grew in numbers from about 50 to 100. Mr. Berry retired to his farm at Hiawatha, Kansas, because of poor health.

**NEBRASKA CITY**—In July 1865, while R. C. Barrow was engaged in his first meeting under the American Board at Nemaha City, D. R. Dungan undertook the work of organizing a church at Nebraska City. That town had become a "city of refuge" for all sorts of people who for various reasons had found their residence in Missouri untenable, and wholly unacceptable to the law-abiding citizens of that state. If they had any religion at home they left it behind, or dropped it in the muddy Missouri. They had little use for a missionary of the cross. The meeting was held in an old yellow school house near what was known as the Cincinnati Hotel. It continued about four weeks. During the meeting an organization was set up with 45 members enrolled, and at the close there were many newly made Christians to be received. Mr. Barrow visited



the meeting at its close.

Previous to this meeting, Charles P. Evans had visited the village, and made a personal canvass, finding altogether 85 persons who had been members of Christian churches elsewhere. Among these was a preacher of the faith, who was much opposed to starting a church in Nebraska City. He remonstrated with Evans but to no purpose. It was only a few weeks later that Mr. Dungan began his meeting. J. B. Johnson came to this work the same year, and preached for several years, apparently being succeeded by J. B. Cake. However there were occasional preachings by John Mullis, William Nelson, Dungan, et al.

During Mr. Johnson's ministry, the church purchased a building site on the corner of sixth and Laramie streets, (Now First Ave.) and erected a substantial brick building at a cost of \$12,000.00 which plus the cost of the lot, totaled \$14,000.00 a heavy load for the small congregation. They borrowed \$4,000.00 from the state school fund. in 1869. The church prospered and by 1874 there had been 235 additions.

For some reason the trustees failed to keep the interest on the school loan paid up. The matter had been in the hands of one of the members, who suddenly left town without accounting for the funds. The state school fund took the building under mortgage. It was turned over to the local school board, which later gave it to the municipality of Nebraska City, and ultimately it was sold to the Catholic church for \$1,100.00. The Christian church offered to buy the property at the time it was sold, but it was not awarded to that body. There is more of the history of this transaction, some of it coming up to the legislaure.

William Kirk, James Rector and B. K. Dibbs preached for the church following Johnson and Cake. When Mr. Dibbs closed his work in 1879, the work was thoroughly disorganized, remaining so until about 1883, when a re-organization was effected with about 40 members under the leadership of A. M. Friend. They met in the homes, and occasionally in the court house. Then the old German Methodist building was rented for a year, during which time a minister whose name can not be remembered, served them.

A location for another building was purchased that year, the trustees being Daniel Gregg, Duke Simpson and J. B. Northcut. A brother Rosellis, furnished the brick at cost to build a modest house, besides donating considerable labor. The cost of the building when completed was about \$2,800.00 and it was formally dedicated in 1884 by John T. Smith, who continued to preach for them for some time.

Mr. Smith made his home at Nebraska City for some years and often supplied the pulpit there. The building so constructed was not well located.

There were difficult days, but the faithful few were not disposed to abandon the work. L. L. Jones labored for two years, and was followed by John T. Smith. Among others who ministered were H. M. Johnson, W. B. Harter, J. E. Wilson, J. W. Neslund and C. H. Thomson. An effort was made to enlarge the house for Bible School work. It was not successful. Then E. E. Briggs took the work and there were a good many added to the church under his ministry, resulting from a great union meeting held in the city.

Evangelists have been called to hold meetings during the years, among them were, Mr. Wing, Edward Clutter, E. J. Sias, Mr. Huston, Samuel Gregg, under the State Society and O. L. Adams. J. DeForest Austin held a meeting for the Nebraska Missionary Society, the church at Belvidere co-operating. W. B. Harter was given partial support in his ministry by the state society, as was J. W. Neslund.

In 1917 R. C. Harding was sent to Nebraska City to revive the work. As a result J. S. Spear was called to minister there, remaining until 1922 or '23. He was followed by Loren Dunton, a graduate of Cotner College who, partially supported by the state society, has done a most outstanding work in that city. During 1927-28 a new site was purchased and the church school unit of a beautiful and modern church house was finished. It is 40x64 feet and is of the latest type of church architecture, of brick and stone construction. From being a little, almost unknown church on a side street, it occupies a worthy place in the city and its work has grown to such proportions and effectiveness that it has a standing among the churches that is creditable. Its membership is now reported at..... and the present pastor is A. F. Motter.

**CLIFTON**—Another rural church that was prominent in making disciple history in Nebraska, is Clifton, which disappeared from the list of churches some years ago, but actually lives in the membership of other churches in and without the state.\*

The introduction to this brief record will be in the words of R. C. Barrow, in one of his many illuminating letters to the Christian Standard, during his long ministry as evangelist for the American and state societies. We read: "R. A. Hawley was the first brother to settle at Clifton. He removed from Centre. Rock County, Wisconsin, to that place in April 1867. Two months later he was followed by D. B. Coryell, for some time an elder of the church at Centre,



and his brother Richard, at that time a Congregationalist. With characteristic promptness and energy these two indefatigable workers made arrangements for a meeting at Brother Hawley's house for the first Lord's day after Brother Coryell arrived.

"They made a thorough canvass of the neighborhood for the purpose of learning the religious views of the people and inviting them out to the meeting. They found a few Baptists and Methodists, many who made no religious profession, and one avowed infidel, but none who would call them brethren. The nearest congregation of Christians was at London, twelve miles distant.

"Both brethren were blessed with excellent Christian wives who were well calculated to assist in establishing the ordinances of the Lord's house at Clifton. The attendance at the first meeting was large; brethren Coryell and Hawley, though at the time unaccustomed to public speaking, read and explained the scriptures as best they could. Others were persuaded to take part in the meeting and considerable interest was manifested. From that time on, meetings were held every Lord's day morning. A Bible class was formed and many animated discussions took place.

"In August, Julius Gilbert, an intelligent and devoted Methodist, formerly a class leader, settled at Clifton. He immediately took an interest in the meetings and Bible class. A deep interest was awakened in the community and almost the whole neighborhood came to-

\* Clifton was about four or five miles south and west from Brock.

gether every Sunday to investigate the Scriptures. About this time, Benton Aldrich, an infidel, made himself conspicuous in the class."

At one time when the design of baptism was under discussion one Baptist brother declared that he agreed with the apostle Paul that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Mr. Aldrich promptly made this answer: "Now your apostle Peter plainly and positively declares that baptism is for remission of sins. You do not believe it. I do not believe it. We are fellow infidels! I am gaining ground. All who disbelieve Peter belong with me." He offered his hand to Mr. Gilbert, the Methodist brother, who declined to be so classified.

The meetings continued through the fall and winter. On the 12th of January Mr. Coryell delivered a discourse and gave an invitation and two came forward. They were baptized. Two weeks from that time all immersed believers united on the Bible to form the Clifton Church of Christ, which was organized with seventy members. Julius Gilbert, and R. A. Hawley elders; George Smedley and Richard Coryell, deacons.

Barrow visited and preached for them in 1869, adding nine to the congregation. The church continued to work and grow for some years. D. B. Coryell became a most effective preacher, holding meetings at Glen Rock, and other points in the vicinity. As most of those early preachers did, he labored for his living and that of his family, and preached for the love of Christ.

The above is but a sample picture of how the gospel was taken to the people and how it won its way into the hearts of men and women, who were "—able to teach others also." The encouragement given by the evangelist provided by the state and national societies lent strength to the hearts of the workers on the field.

R. A. Hawley was for many years an elder in the First Church at Lincoln. Richard Coryell was a prominent elder and leader in the Brock church until his death.

**PAWNEE CITY**—The second co-operative convention was held at Brownville in the fall of 1865. J. B. Judd and his wife, of Pawnee City, in Pawnee County, some forty miles west of Brownville, came to that meeting. He came not only for the fellowship, but declared his intentions of taking back with him a preacher to hold a meeting in Pawnee. At that time the religious sentiment of the little town was practically all Methodist. W. B. Raper and the Judds were the only Disciples in the town.

The Methodists not only had the only organized church body, but also the Nemaha Valley Seminary, which was located there, was practically a Methodist school. D. R. Dungan was persuaded to go with them, and on arrival there, arrangements were made to hold a meeting in the Seminary building, the only suitable place at that time.

The public gave little heed to the strange evangelist for a few days. Then interest began to develop, opposition arose, and when that occurs the crowds usually begin to increase.

The best advertising a new teaching can have is a bit of biting opposition. And it must not be overlooked that those preachers of more than a half century ago, had been trained to speak positively as to the sinfulness of division in the Body of Christ, the Church, while those who had been reared in denominational folds were not always complacent when their honored standards were being attacked. Especially so when the attack appeared to be so well grounded in the scriptures.

There was opposition, strong and bitter and it did not originate with what were commonly called the sinners. Stories were whispered about starting nowhere, but going everywhere, that the Christ-



ian preacher was a spy and a member of a band of horse thieves!

The people came, they heard and some of them believed the gospel story as preached to them. They read their Bibles, and many of them carried the New Testament on their persons. Ten were baptized, among them David Butler, who afterward became the first governor of the new state. Several former Baptists also joined the little company.

Dungan had to leave when the interest was growing. But he found Barrow just getting back from Rock Bluff, and that team-mate started the next morning for Pawnee to finish the meeting. The coming of Barrow was not expected by the people, and caused much surprise, and some consternation on the part of the opposition. They began again to block the progress of the new movement, by many tactics not now dreamed of among church people.

One such was the deposition of the carcass of a sheep in the pool wherein baptisms were to be performed the next day. Mr. Barrow pronounced it "The strongest and most scent-sible argument brought against baptism" he had encountered up to that time. Nevertheless, sixteen persons were baptized during the three weeks meeting, though that particular baptismal service had to be postponed.

David Butler's wife, followed her husband into the new church.

The formal organization was effected by Dungan, in the last days of September, or early October, 1865. Those included in the list of charter members were, W. B. Raper, J. B. Judd and wife, W. I. Fowler and wife, David Butler and wife, Hattie Hollinshead, (Mrs. Willis) I. W. Hollinshead, Richard Linn, Louis Linn, Martha Linn, W. G. Linn and wife, I. Linn and wife, Emma, Jennie and Anna Linn, J. A. Barnes, Hannah Galliger, F. L. Liming, George Bush and wife, J. W. Moore and E. W. Moore.

G. R. Hand held a meeting with the church in 1866, and Barrow preached for them in a short meeting. In 1867 D. R. Dungan became the regular pastor, serving there for three years. In the spring of 1869 a church building was erected, but five years later was sold to the Baptists.

During the decade of the 70's there was no regular preaching in Pawnee City, but the church maintained its organization, and such services as were possible. No doubt the lack of a place to meet militated against any aggressive work. In 1880 S. A. Hoover began to preach half time, Elder J. A. Parker alternating, and from this part

time ministry the church grew sufficiently strong to undertake the erection of another meeting house, and it was dedicated in January 1882 by D. R. Dungan.

In the next ten years the church had several ministers, among them being A. D. Finch, Gallagher, Profader, and O. H. Derry. In 1892 T. J. Williamson began his pastorate, giving only half time until January 1894, when he took the work full time, continuing until March 1st, 1895. E. L. Poston followed to January 1897, C. A. Sias, a Cotner student followed in supply work until 1900 when he located with the church as pastor, and remained until 1903. During his ministry the church was moved to a new site and remodeled into a much more convenient and practical workshop for the Bible School and young people's work. This new-old building was dedicated by Professor Denny, of Drake university.

From December 1903 to 1905 T. A. Lindmeyer served the church. Following him the preachers were G. M. Weimer, Charles Wheeler, John W. Moody, Dr. G. W. Campbell, J. A. Sinclair, A. McCracken, and E. D. Hageman, and the present pastor is J. S. Reel, 1930. The church has just built a beautiful new home of brick and tile at a cost of \$15,000.

Another form of state missionary help to the churches is noted here. The services of State Secretary Alber was called for by the church board. The plan he suggested was given to an architect, and the building is a fine example of economy of construction, coupled with beauty and adaptability for church and church school purposes, with sufficient accommodation for the social side of the work.

This church has made much of young people's work, especially in the Bible School. The membership reached 220 during the ministry of Lindenmeyer. Its recent reports show 250. Among those who had active part in the church other than those named are J. C. Dort, and family, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Griffith and Miss Olive Griffith, who served as state secretary of the Nebraska C. W. B. M., and for some years as missionary under the foreign society.

**TABLE ROCK**—The name of this town in Pawnee County, was derived from a rock on the hills in the vicinity, resembling a huge table. It has been overturned for many years. In September, 1863, Charles P. Evans, in company with John H. Parker, visited Table Rock, and preached a few sermons at the house of a brother Lane, who then lived near the site of the Methodist church. They held meetings also



in a school house not far from the Blacklaw mill east of Table Rock. In the spring of 1865 Richard Linn and his cultured family settled near the town, and he began at once to seek to have the cause of New Testament Christianity established in the village. It was not successful, and when the church at Pawnee City was organized, he and his family went into it, but still hoping to have a church established at Table Rock.

\* In the winter of 1866 D. R. Dungan held a meeting baptizing four persons. In the fall of 1872 R. C. Barrow held a meeting and this resulted in the organization there, including the Linn families. The church roll contained 30 members. There were several other families named Linn in the vicinity, so that the early church had a good many members of that name.

The church did not at once build a meeting house, and the history of the years intervening until 1889 is not available. That year Chas. P. Evans held a meeting and a re-organization was effected. A building of brick was erected in 1891, and it is still in good condition. C. R. Skinner was the minister in 1891 and 1892 and he was followed by C. P. Evans for a time.

The list of preachers include the following, probably, in the order named:—A man named Dairy, E. S. Chamberlain. A meeting was held by L. L. Coombs and he continued a year with the church. A. B. McFarland may have been next for a time. In 1906 the State Board sent evangelist Whiston for a meeting, E. L. Keckley being the student preacher; 22 were added and the church called Keckley for full time student work.

For a number of years thereafter the church had student service, including three years 1908-10, with Professor G. M. Jacobs from Cotner. In 1912 J. E. Wilson was engaged in his profession of dentistry there and preached for the church. D. H. S. Atwood, G. B. Dunning, A. A. Bolden and Professor E. E. Smith follow in order named. A. L. Ogden served the church in 1923-25, and for two years E. M. Pardee of Lincoln supplied them, supported in part by the State Society. T. N. Russell is the present pastor.

During this later period meetings were held by C. C. Atwood, Harry Knowles and Ridnour, C. V. Allison, O. A. Adams, Matt Delezene and M. J. Boyer.

There are three charter members of the re-organization in 1880; Mrs. Clarinda Crisler, Miss Anna Pangburn, who served many years as church clerk, and Mrs. Della McCoy. The membership at one time

reached 168 and at last report is 94 in 1930.

**HUMBOLT**—The original proprietor of the townsite and the first settler at Humbolt, was O. J. Tinker. His place was on the road between Brownville and Pawnee City, and the evangelists would usually stop with him enroute between these two places. This was in 1865 and forward. His door was always open to the itinerant Christian preachers. Doubtless he and his family, having few neighbors, were as glad to have the messengers of his Lord come to their home as they were to accept his open and gracious hospitality.

A group of Illinois brethren settled at a point about 12 miles west of Nemaha City, and some nine miles northeast of the present town of Humbolt. A school house known as the Monterey school became the meeting place for religious worship. D. W. Shurtleiff came with this group, and he preached at times.

September 1866, R. C. Barrow assisted him in holding a meeting there, in which forty persons were baptized, seven of them being young men between twenty and twenty-three years of age. At another baptismal service three men were baptized, all between sixty and eighty years old. Mr. Barrow records the fact a few years later that the Monterey congregation had mostly moved from the vicinity and only two of three families remained. The church had ceased to function.

Mr. Barrow held a meeting in a new abode school house near the Tinker homestead, in October 1866. Perhaps D. W. Shurtleiff and Richard Linn had spoken there previously. Mr. Barrow writes of having often stopped at the home of Mr. Tinker during the winter of 1865-66. A successful protracted meeting was held by Dungan in the winter of 1867-68 and at that time an organization was set up with O. J. Tinker as the first elder and Silas Morphew and A. M. Gentry the deacons.

John Mullis is mentioned as serving the church quite often in those early days, and William Smith and J. F. Berry, P. T. Russell, F. M. Hawkins and T. B. Edwards ministered at times in the following years. For a decade they met in the school house, in private homes, and in the Methodist church. The Christian people contributed to the erection of the latter building with the understanding that they should have the use of it part of the time, when not conflicting with the Methodist services. This was not satisfactory, so a building was begun and completed in 1878 at a cost of \$2,500.00. In 1883 James M. Dewese and J. C. Cox were added to the eldership, and J. K. Cornelius, E. P. Tinker, T. J. Frazier and David Matten were chosen deacons, Gentry and Morphew having moved away.



In February 1884 Cyrus Jones was elected as an elder, and a resolution passed constituting the elders and deacons as the trustees of the church. In 1894 a board of trustees was elected, consisting of J. C. Cox, E. P. Tinker, J. K. Cornelius, Charlton Hall and Cyrus Jones.

About this time, the church building was remodeled, making it into a well-appointed workshop for all departments of the church. One of the boasts made in this transaction was that in spite of failure of crops they were able to pay the \$1,400.00 cost without recourse to methods of money getting that might be questioned as proper for a Christian people to engage in. Neither did they find it necessary to discharge their pastor to save expense.

A list of preachers who have served this church would include besides those named previously, James P. Roach, T. A. Parkinson, W. H. Tucker, A. D. Finch, Charles W. Elder, Joseph Shields, E. I. Poston, Robert L. Jones, O. H. Derry, W. M. Adams, L. L. Coombs, George C. Ritchie, John Friend, J. S. Myers, A. W. Henry, Galen M. Goode, W. A. Morrison, Bert Wilson, George Aydelotte, J. T. Adams, Ford Ellis, Harry J. Hill, Earnest Molloy, B. H. Dawson, E. J. Wright and W. N. Armstrong. Last report indicates 290 members.

**TECUMSEH**—In June 1866 Mr. Barrow was invited by Henry Sutherlin, a farmer-preacher living on Spring Creek, in Johnson County, who had preached a few times on Yankee Creek about four miles west of Tecumseh, to visit and preach in that community. They spent the night with Calvin Stubblefield, and in spite of a heavy rain which prevailed through the night, a small group assembled at the grove appointed. Seven of those present were disciples, among them Cyrus Douglass who lived about a mile west of Tecumseh.

The following day Mr. Barrow sought for a building in which to hold a meeting in the town. There was no public building, and Mrs. Mary Bivins, wife of Alexander Bivins, one of the leading men of the village, offered her kitchen for the purpose. She had read Ben Franklin's tract on Christian Experience and was attracted by its teaching. A full kitchen greeted the evangelist the first two evenings, but the third night a show at another residence took the crowd! Mrs. Bivins made the good confession the following night and on Lord's day was baptized in the Nemaha river. Much of the success following in that meeting was credited by Barrow to her excellent influence.

March 1st, 1867, he began a second meeting in the new school house, which continued through the month. On the 31st, an organization was effected, including those previously gained, and forty-two additional. Henry Sutherlin, James M. Thomson, and S. L. F.

Ward were chosen elders. In November of that year, Mr. Barrow moved from Nemaha City to Tecumseh.

The church continued to meet in the school house until 1869 when it moved to the court house, where in 1870 Dungan and Barrow held a meeting. Excluded from that in 1870, they began, under the direction of D. Melloy, a carpenter, Jason L. Phillips, Cyrus Douglass and J. A. Dillon, who, with his wife united about that time, to build a church house 24x42. It was finished and seated with temporary seats in the fall of 1871, but was badly damaged by a tornado the next summer. It was repaired, finished and opened for worship in February 1872.

This house was used until January 6, 1889 when a new one on the corner of Third and Lincoln streets was dedicated, the old one being sold to the German Lutherans, in 1887. This building is still occupied by the congregation.

The loss of records makes it necessary to depend on memories in part. This, it may be said, is true of all too many of the churches. The list of ministers who have served the church can be only partially given. They include, Mr. Barrow, who, after moving to Tecumseh, was a member of the congregation till his death. He gave much thoughtful oversight to the church in connection with his work as state evangelist for nearly twenty-five years.

Mr. Barrow was called to his reward in November, 1890, at the age of 58, at Tecumseh. Not an old man, and still young in his zeal and spirit. The major part of his preaching was done in Nebraska, and it was fitting that his body should find rest in Tecumseh's beautiful cemetery.

In the beginning, Elijah Thomson and Henry Sutherlin were the dependence for several years. Then Shurtleiff, Ellsworth, Matthews, Hawley, and D. B. Coryell, gave some time to the work. When D. R. Dungan was Chancellor of Cotner, he preached for them regularly for a year or two.

Others were A. W. Henry, Matthew Wing, J. J. Henry, T. A. Parkinson, John T. Smith, E. W. Justus, Marion Boles, W. T. Maupin, L. Penn Bush, who in 1895 was called for an indefinite period; L. H. Humphrey, W. N. Adams, A. L. Zink, C. W. Cooper, H. J. Young, O. H. Loomis, Rodney McQuary, H. J. Hill, Frank Kennedy, the last six being students at Cotner, - W. C. Lessley, Willard McCarthy and M. J. Boyer. Membership recorded at this time 200.

This church has been among those that have endured severe internal difficulties, that in one instance, threatened the perpetuity of the organization. Some of the leaders, had the good judgement to



call in some outside counsel from the state society, and after conferences the Christian sense and grace of the membership and preacher, was sufficient to surmount the difficulty and the church went on its way in peace.

There comes to mind the names of J. A. Dillon an elder in the church almost continuously for many years, and Mrs. Dillon, Elder Clark and wife, the Sherman families, and others. It was from this church that Rodney L. McQuary started his Christian work, getting his A. B. from Cotner, and is now the pastor of the great church at Anderson, Indiana. It helped a number of the ministers thru school by calling them as student preachers.

**GREENWOOD**—The genesis of the church at Greenwood will be found in the work done by D. R. Dungan when he was just in the beginnings of his ministry. This was in the Salt Creek valley three or four miles north of Greenwood, at a place called Bell's station. Services were held in February 1865 in a log cabin. A. C. Loder, and his wife, Robert Farmer, M. C. Long, Mr. Parker and others confessed Christ. R. E. Farmer was the first person immersed in Salt creek. Others of the original members were L. H. Bell and wife, John Kaler and wife, L. C. Chevront and wife, O. Marshall and wife, Wm. Sheffer and wife and S. Denning. An organization was effected and Mr. Sheffer was appointed elder and Lemuel Chevront deacon.

The regular meetings continued in the log cabin and there were a number added to the membership. Meetings were held in private houses and in groves and school houses. In the summer of 1865 a meeting was held in a grove on Callahan's branch, and after that A. C. Loder was made an elder, and Owen Marshall elected deacon. Since that time Philip Galley and Wm. Laughlin were elected elders.

When the railroad came up the valley, the town of Greenwood grew up and the church gradually assembled there. George Mansfield of Cedar Creek, on the south bank of the Platte, in Eight Mile Grove precinct, where Dungan organized a small congregation in 1865, preached for the church for some time, and later Benjamin Baker served for a while. Dungan frequently held meetings for them during that period.

Barrow came to Greenwood for a meeting in February 1874, and had forty-seven additions, thirty-three of them by baptism. Dungan continued the meeting and twenty-two were added. This meeting was held in the Congregational church. C. A. Miller, a Baptist preacher, took fellowship with the church during the meeting. Mr. Barrow spent a few days with the church not many weeks afterward, speaking in the hall because the church was refused them.

Naturally and inevitably the church stirred itself to build a house of its own, and this was done in 1874, under the leadership of Marshall and Loder. In September of that year the state convention was held at Greenwood. The church grew as the years passed, enduring the privations incident to all of the pioneer communities. Following the erection of the building the preachers serving the church were Michael Combs, P. Sommers, George W. Mayfield, C. A. Miller, Rufus Pertle, Jas. Connoran and Wm. H. Hardman. The membership was reported as 100 in 1882. No records are at hand concerning the men who served the church in 1883-1893.

In 1891 the state board called A. W. Henry as corresponding Secretary and evangelist. He began his work with a meeting at Greenwood September 15, and added eighty-three to the congregation. The work made progress after this successful meeting.

Beginning in 1894 A. W. Henry ministered there until 1898. Loren M. Wiles followed until 1901. After that the following ministers have served there, some of them being a supply from Bethany or Lincoln; L. P. Builta, H. H. Utterback, L. A. Hussong, C. F. Martin, Allen Murray, A. L. Ogden, George W. Light, J. H. Bicknell, Willard McCarthy, C. A. Park, Virgil Sly, Raymond Baldwin, H. L. Grassmueck, and Ernest Baker. Part of these were students or other supply preachers.

When A. W. Henry took up the work in 1894 following his three years as state secretary and evangelist, the work grew in numbers and influence, and at the close of his ministry in 1898, 225 members were reported. The membership is now 125.

**ILLINOIS SETTLEMENT**—This name was given to a well settled neighborhood in the general vicinity of Talmadge and Brock. It was a prosperous community, and of substantial people. Among the earliest settlers were R. V. Black, Felix and Frederick Setts and their families, all members of the Christian church.

In February 1868 Mr. Barrow conducted the first meeting held by our people there, baptized twenty persons and set up a church of twenty-seven members. Henry Sutherlin preached regularly every two weeks for a year, and Mr. Barrow visited them monthly during the second year. John Truax located with the congregation in 1870. At about this time several disciples came to the community, among them being brethren Elliot, Evan, Calvin and Hubbard, members of Christian churches. The work was greatly strengthened.

Truax preached for them for two years. Cyrus Alton helped him in a meeting in the spring of 1871, and added a number to the membership. After Truax, Mr. Barrow again cared for the church month-



ly for some time. It is unfortunate that no more of the history of this church is now available.

In 1905 a church at Talmadge appears in the Nebraska Year Book, but it disappears again in 1925. Brock is not far from this location also. It is reasonable to conclude that these members at the Illinois Settlement may be found in the lists of members in these and other churches farther away. The railroads remade the country as to towns and villages in that part of the state, where the churches preceded them and set up business in what is now definitely rural communities.

The disappearance of so many names of these earlier churches, is in no sense a fault of the early workers. One could as well say that the disappearance of the churches in Debre, Lystra, Antioch in Syria,, and Jerusalem, is evidence of the failure of Christianity and of the Apostolic college as well as of Paul and his co-laborers.

These churches upheld the banner of Christ in their localities, and many who were baptized into Christ's body there, carried the light of the gospel with them to other fields, like those Jerusalem Christians, who, when "Scattered abroad, went about preaching the Word."

FALLS CITY—It was not an easy matter to establish a church in Falls City. The state evangelists had been anxious to do so, and sought opportunity for so doing. Mr. Barrow held a ten days meeting in the spring of 1866 but there was no suitable response. Three years later G. T. Webster, although under a ban of exclusion from the church at Oregon, Missouri, brought together a number of disciples living mostly in the country.

They began to build a meeting house, but it was not finished, and ultimately passed into private hands. Mr. Webster baptized a large number who came forward at Boyd's school house and at the Pearson school house and in the town. These knew nothing of the former history of the preacher and were acting in all good faith, and his abilities attracted people to him. The worthiness or unworthiness of the preacher and the baptizer, cannot mitigate against the confession and baptism of sincere believers.

W. E. Neal moved to Falls City from Maysville, Kentucky, early in 1872 and at once began to gather together scattered disciples into an organization, succeeding in enlisting twenty-three former members into the new church. In the autumn of that same year, T. L. Cartwright held a meeting there adding forty new members. They purchased a lot and built a meeting house that was dedicated by J. B. Briney, in 1873. Among the generous givers of that early day

were Charles Kreker and his wife Hettie. In 1872 a successful meeting was held in the city led by T. L. Cartwright. There were a number of conversions and a board of trustees was elected and definite plans laid for regular services.

In June 1874 Mr. Barrow held a series of meetings with the church, and added twenty to the list. The Baptists were holding a meeting there at the same time, and Mr. Webster above mentioned united with that church, and later preached for them. In 1880 T. W. Pinkerton was the preacher, and W. E. Neal, W. B. Schumaker and Charles Kreker were the elders. The list of preachers include the following, though possibly not in the order of service: T. W. Pinkerton in 1878-79, J. Mad Williams, J. M. Zielyer, A. W. Henry, L. O. Ferguson, O. C. Atwater, W. T. Maupin, J. D. Davis, D. L. Dunkelberger, M. F. Redlein, Elmer Ward Cole, F. Pougeon, J. Cronenberger, T. A. Lindenmeyer. F. E. Day served the church in 1909-10, and during his ministry they built the present beautiful and well appointed church house. Z. T. Sweeney was called to dedicate it, and perhaps a gloomier day for a public gathering never dawned. A night of rain turning into a slush of snow, and continuing through most of the day, made the task of raising sufficient money to clear the building of debt practically impossible. It was a day of conflicting emotions, anxieties, and many splendid examples of real sacrificial giving. Charles L. Wheeler, D. C. Troxel, H. J. Dudley, John G. Olmstead, F. Grant Hamm, R. E. Deadman have served and Wiley Pruett is now serving as minister.

Among the faithful workers and leaders in the church should be mentioned Geo. W. Grinstead, J. R. Cain Sr., the Tarpleys, J. W. Wherry, who served some years as Superintendent of the Bible school, T. J. Oliver, and T. L. Slocum, and of course the families of these.

The Newcomer family will be remembered among the faithful in those middle years of the church's life. Especially the fact that Miss Annette gave a long period of service as secretary and organizer of the C. W. B. M. in Nebraska. Closing that work in 1897, she became secretary in the Iowa work of the Women's Missionary societies, and is still in service there.

The present board of elders is composed of Dr. O. F. Lang, R. R. Ross, H. L. Kloeppel and W. B. Nichols. J. L. Slocum, is treasurer and George R. Grinstead is Elder Emeritus.

CEDAR CREEK—D. R. Dungan writes of having organized a church at Cedar Creek; though whether he meant the little town of that name on the south bank of the Platte east of Ashland, cannot



be determined. Barrow also mentions it as being the residence of George Mansfield who preached for the Greenwood church for some time. The church must have been short lived as it does not appear in any state lists from 1892 forward.

ELK CREEK—R. C. Barrow held a meeting at Butler, now the town of Elk Creek in the southeast corner of Johnson County, in March 1869. J. M. Thompson, and Robert Hicks were appointed elders, M. J. Cody and E. Thompson as deacons. Henry Sutherlin preached for the congregation twice a month for a year, and D. W. Shurtleiff monthly for nearly two years.

Meetings have been held there by O. A. Phelps, and James McGuire. Of the preachers who have ministered to them the following are known—A. L. Ogden, D. A. Youtzy, who was with them in 1899, 1900 and 1901. The church then had forty-five members. E. C. Thompson, H. A. Lemon, R. F. Allen, L. A. Moomaw, O. D. Purcell and T. V. Hubbell. The last have been supplies from Bethany. The church has a comfortable frame building. When it was built is not known to this writer. The families of E. R. Merwin, E. C. Thomson, A. Deremiah, and Ira McClure are among those who have been active in the church. The present listed membership is thirty-five resident.

UNADILLA—The foundations of the Unadilla church were laid by J. B. Johnson, who, because of ill health, gave up his pastorate in Cleveland, Ohio, and came to Nebraska, settling on a farm one mile east of the village of Unadilla, in 1872. There were about a dozen houses besides the railroad station. He found no church of any name there, and no disciples, but there were some fine Congregationalists and Methodists in the neighborhood.

Mr. Johnson began to hold meetings in his home and in those of the neighbors. He succeeded in organizing a Sunday school supported by the entire religious element of the community. In June 1873 state evangelist Barrow assisted Mr. Johnson in holding a protracted meeting. He had previously baptized several. Ten more were baptized during the meeting, and officers were chosen, and the communion spread for the first time. The night and Lord's day meetings were held in the store of Mr. Abbott, the week day meetings at the home of Mr. Johnson.

Anna Saunders, daughter of William Saunders made the good confession at the state meeting in Lincoln, in the fall of 1872, and was baptized by Barrow in the baptistry of the Baptist church. She later united with the Unadilla church. In all there were about 21 charter members. In 1875 among other additions, were W. W. West,

and some of the members of the Ramey family. Mr. West became one of the stable and consecrated members of the church. A meeting house was erected in 1879, and dedicated by J. B. Johnson and Cyrus Alton, all money being raised to pay for it. About this time W. Winters was engaged to preach for them one fourth time for \$130.00 a year.

The first preacher's meeting among the Disciples in the state was held at Unadilla in September, 1880. Those in attendance were C. A. Miller, Greenwood; L. J. Correll, Brownville;—Henry of Nemaha City;—Tusker, of Kentucky; Cyrus Alton, Elmwood; T. W. Pinkerton, Falls City;—Robbins, Tecumseh; J. B. Johnson and W. Winter, Unadilla. Following this meeting Mr. Pinkerton held a meeting with the church. Mr. Winter resigned, and J. B. Johnson again took up the ministry there, to receive for half time, \$350.00 per year. J. W. Ingraham of Omaha, held a meeting in January 1883, and because of ill health Mr. Johnson resigned. Adolph Parker was called in June 1885, receiving \$500.00 and one half of his house rent. In September 1886, Wm. Sumpter began a ministry lasting five years. Marion Boles was called for a meeting in 1888, which lasted five weeks with about fifty additions.

This church had grown to be one of the strong churches in the state, evangelistic in spirit, cooperative with the brotherhood, and functioning in a Christian way in the local community. Besides those members already named there were such stable Christians as the Abbott family, J. H. and Mrs. Currie, the Ramey families, the Crownovers, David Everest and sister, Dr. McIntyre and family and Mrs. Calla Scott Willard, who contributed to make the church a real power at home and abroad, and Mr. Willard.

In this connection the Unadilla church has demonstrated that saying of the Master's, overlooked by the gospel writers and redeemed from utter loss by Paul, in Acts 20; "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Out from the healthy spiritual life of that fine church has gone John H. Currie and Mrs. Currie to Bradshaw, at a critical time in the life of that church, to be a tower of strength to the work there. The Ramey families to York and Lincoln First, the Everests to Lincoln, Mrs. Calla Scott Willard to Bethany and for thirteen years the secretary and organizer of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions in Nebraska. The Abbott families moved to Sargent and have had active connection with that struggling congregation.

Following the long illness and death of the pastor, Mr. Parker, the church erected a cottage for his widow and her family, and the:



state society assisted in her support for a time.

Among the later ministers serving the church were, D. A. Youtzy, R. H. Kline, Oscar Sweaney, W. T. Hacker, C. A. Sias, W. B. Harter, E. G. Hamilton, M. G. C. Bennett, D. M. Sayles, Mrs. L. Kelly, J. L. Ellis, J. S. Reel, E. E. Smith, L. P. Bush, Fay Stephenson, and J. B. Williams. With the slowing down of the growth of the village the church has felt the decline as well. Its contribution to the churches in the state and elsewhere has been large. Lincoln, York, Bradshaw, Sargent and other churches have been strengthened by its faithful work. The present pastor is John B. Williams and the membership is 85.

**ST. DEROIN**—A half breed Indian, named Joseph Derooin opened an Indian trading point in northeast corner of Richardson County near the river. He laid out a town site and one Robert Hawkes built a house and opened up a stock of goods for trading with the Indians, that same year. The territory was not open to settlement until 1854, but trading with the Indians was allowed on permits.

In the fall of 1867, Mr. Barrow visited with a brother Laughlin, about four miles south of the village of St. Derooin and held a meeting in the town while there. Twenty persons were converted. Other meetings followed and the church was organized temporarily.

The little town was the "Mecca of materialism in the state" and in 1869 D. R. Dungan delivered a series of lectures against that teaching. Soon afterward the church was fully set up with Isaac Clark as elder. Barrow again held a meeting in the town in 1871 and baptized eight persons. In the fall of that year a debate between Clark Braden and J. W. Shockey, a stout materialist, stirred the community. After the close of that debate, Dungan and J. W. Tate preached for a time and more than a score of persons were baptized. The little town is but a name, and the church there has followed others in like situation.

**MONTEREY**—Some Illinois disciples settled about twelve miles west of Nemaha City, in 1864-65 and among them was a preacher named D. W. Shurtlieff. In September 1866, Mr. Barrow assisted Shurtlieff in a meeting resulting in forty baptisms. Among these were seven young men between the ages of twenty and twenty-four, baptized at one time. On another occasion three old men were immersed, the youngest more than sixty and the oldest nearly eighty years of age. Even before Mr. Barrow closed his work in 1887 the church had disappeared, largely by removals. Yet the work of the preacher, Shurtlieff, was abundant and effective even after the church he founded was gone.

**LINCOLN FIRST**—The first session of the legislature of Nebraska held in Lincoln, the new capital, was in the winter of 1868-69. D. R. Dungan spent much of his time there and made a canvass of the town and vicinity and preached several times, the first sermons by a preacher of the Christian Church.

He found twenty-eight persons who had been members of the church elsewhere. They mostly lived in the country, but an organization was set up January 24, 1869. Michael Combs and Joseph Robinson were chosen as elders. This meeting was held in the home of G. W. French, Dungan calling the meeting to order, and Wm. Ensminger was made chairman of the meeting. W. B. S. Combs was chosen as secretary. Mr. Ensminger, G. W. Aikin, and Mr. Combs acted as trustees.

J. M. Yearnshaw came to Lincoln the following May and the second Lord's day in July 1869 eight members met in Yearnshaw's uncompleted dwelling and spread the communion, the table being a carpenter's work bench. Twelve came the next Lord's day and thereafter the communion was observed regularly, Mr. Yearnshaw preaching for them. The Methodist people had the only house of worship in the city at that time, situated on 10th street. In the fall of 1869 they finished a new house and our brethren rented the old one, using it about a year.

The first immersion was that of Julia McCoy, afterward Mrs. Marshall, in the flood waters of the Salt river, about where the Burlington station now stands on P. Street.

A grant of three lots in the city to each of the principal religious organizations of the city was made by the legislature, on condition that a house be constructed thereon within three years. A subscription was started by Dungan securing \$1200.00, and in 1869 Yearnshaw, French and Hawk were appointed as a building committee. Yearnshaw did most of the work for the committee. Another \$1,000 was subscribed and in November the building was begun.

The house was opened for worship July 3, 1870, at the corner of 10th and K streets, just ahead of the expiration of the three years period for building. Yearnshaw worked on the building and superintended its construction, occasionally advancing funds when the collections on pledges failed. He delivered the opening or dedicatory address, to a crowded house, including the ministers of the churches in the city.

The state meeting was held in the building in September that year. Worship was held regularly and additions were constant, reaching a total membership of eighty in 1871. In May of that year D. R. Dun-



gan was called as preacher for full time, and continued for three years, winning the respect of the people for himself and for the church. An interim following Dungan's service was filled by A. R. Benton of the State University, and the veteran Yearnshaw. J. B. Johnson was called in October 1874, but was not able to remain because of ill health. J. Mad. Williams of Beatrice supplied every two weeks. (From a brief note in the Nebraska History it appears that late in the 70's the membership was 100, and the board of officers were as follows:— Elders, George Leavitt, J. S. Major. Secretary, C. M. Hunt. Deacons, F. T. Sherwin, W. E. De Groat. Then meeting in the house at 10th and K. streets.)

From very early in its history the Lincoln First Church began to envision a large program for covering the growing city with Christian congregations. Under the second pastorate of J. B. Johnson in 1888, with C. W. Hemry as associate, the church undertook a mission in west Lincoln, where packing houses and brick kiln had been established. Mr. Hemry was given the oversight of this work, and also conducted a young men's Bible class in the mid-week, the attendants being from the state university and the Burlington railroad offices.

He preached also in the school house on the G. H. Exley farm and at another on east O street. The church was at the same time planning a new and more creditable building at 14th and K streets, which was completed under the ministry of Chas. B. Newnan who came to them from Omaha in 1888.

Under his leadership the church took a great part in the establishment of Cotner University in the village of Bethany Heights, north east of the city, now an integral part of the city itself. The new church was completed in 1889, and was a most beautiful building. It was equipped with kitchen and basement dining room, a Bible school available for additional auditorium space, pastor's study, and a finely appointed baptistry.

Financial conditions grew hard in the nineties, culminating in the panic of 1893, and the building debt was a heavy burden, in addition to its extended program. Several efforts were made to save the building, many churches from without the city contributing thereto. But as often happens, internal troubles developed which aggravated the difficulties already present, so that the church found itself divided, and its building lost.

For some time the church had been known as the Central Christian Church. A group of some of the older members and officers associated themselves under the name, First Christian Church. The actual separation appears to have taken place in 1897 or 1898 as the Year

Book for 1898 lists them separately, neither reporting a located minister. W. P. Aylsworth, Chancellor of Cotner University, long time friend of the church, was asked to minister to the Central Church, which he did with the confessed purpose of avoiding a permanent schism. He was in the confidence of both parties, and his hope for a final adjustment, satisfactory to the Lord whom the churches were professedly following, was always with him in those trying days, and happily it was realized.

The First Church met for some time in a store building at the corner of 12th and N streets. T. J. Thomson was called as pastor in 1899 and served until 1902. The N. C. M. S. and the A. C. M. S. co-operated in supporting this work during most of Mr. Thomson's service. Early in that year the church purchased a lot on the corner of 14th and M streets, aided by the Board of Church extension, at a cost of \$4,000.00. They began a neat structure, veneered with brick, which was far enough along for occupancy by the middle of 1902.

N. S. Haynes of Illinois was called and brought to this work his long experience in city work, his strong personality and level head. August 4, 1901, Lincoln Central, in the interest of peace and unity for which the great movement, begun by the Campbells and others, had been pleading, disbanded their organization and returned to the First Church, under the new pastor N. S. Haynes. A victory for consecrated Christian living on the part of both groups. An event that gave the churches of the whole state a new impetus for progress. The re-united church has made steady growth in every line of work throughout the years.

H. H. Harmon, born, reared and educated in Nebraska, getting his training at Cotner College, State University, and Butler College in Indiana, then pastor of the Tabernacle Church, Columbus, Indiana, accepted a call to the First Church and began his labors in 1906.

In this time the church had been enlarged and remodeled, and additional property secured for further enlargement. The church and its Educational work had fully outgrown its plant.

Mr. Harmon resigned, and in 1924 Ray E. Hunt, then of East Orange, New Jersey, was called. He is still the leader, and in 1926 the church sold its property at 14th and M. streets and located at 16th and K. street having built the Educational unit of a splendid church edifice, one of the finest buildings of its kind in the west. Its last reported membership is 1191 resident and 1363 non resident.

To the names of those already mentioned, who have been active in making the First Church at Lincoln the great power it now is in the city and the state very many could be added. But space will permit



only a few. J. Z. Briscoe, who was for many years an officer as was Edwin Jeary, and their families. G. H. Exley and Mrs. Exley, R. A. Hawley, J. F. and Mrs. Winters, N. A. Bacon, and these we have met earlier in the history. N. K. Griggs and family, T. F. A. Williams and Mrs. Williams, Joel W. Deweese and wife, Porter Hedge and family, the Hallets, Bagnalls, Houseworths, Governor W. A. Poynter and family, and the Critchfields. These and many others in those earlier days.

The men and women who have taken up the work in the last score of years have been the type to fit the church into the changes that have taken place as the big town of Lincoln has rapidly taken on the character, skyline and vigor of a modern city, broadening its financial vision, but retaining its religious and educational ideals, to the end that it may yet be counted the city of homes and culture.

First Church has been big enough to foster the development of churches in other parts of the city, at East Lincoln and the Tabernacle Church in the south east and Third Church. It has always been a moving factor in any enterprise in the suburbs looking toward the spread of the gospel. It has for a number of years last past, borne the heaviest part of the work connected with caring for the young people of the Christian homes of the state and other states attending the University of Nebraska.

LINCOLN EAST SIDE—In 1888, while Mr. Hemry was associate pastor at the First church, he opened and carried on a Sunday school in the Erb building at the southwest corner of the intersection of 27th and Vine streets. Out of this, or at least augmented by it grew the movement that founded the East Side church and located it at 27th and Y streets.

His preaching at the school house on east O street, and his search for former members of Christian churches, resident in that section of the city, revealed a large number of un-identified Christians. Many of these were included in the new organization. The plan of work that had been followed by the First church officers, was to include all the organizations of the city under one official head at that church. The West Lincoln congregation and chapel were so managed.

When property was purchased for the East Lincoln work, the same plan was in force, but at the urgent appeal of Mr. Hemry and C. C. Munson, it was deeded to Mr. Munson and Mr. Hemry and held by them until the first building was erected, when with the consent of the First church board, a second congregation was organized with a full corps of officers, and received from Munson and Hemry a

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The men and women who have taken up the work in the last score of years have been the type to fit the church into the changes that have taken place as the big town of Lincoln has rapidly taken on the character, skyline and vigor of a modern city, broadening its financial vision, but retaining its religious and educational ideals, to the end that it may yet be counted the city of homes and culture.

First Church has been big enough to foster the developement of churches in other parts of the city, at East Lincoln and the Tabernacle Church in the south east and Third Church. It has always been a moving factor in any enterprise in the suburbs looking toward the spread of the gospel. It has for a number of years last past, borne the heaviest part of the work connected with caring for the young people of the Christian homes of the state and other states attending the University of Nebraska.

LINCOLN EAST SIDE—In 1888, while Mr. Hemry was associate pastor at the First church, he opened and carried on a Sunday school in the Erb building at the southwest corner of the intersection of 27th and Vine streets. Out of this, or at least augmented by it grew the movement that founded the East Side church and located it at 27th and Y streets.

His preaching at the school house on east O street, and his search for former members of Christian churches, resident in that section of the city, revealed a large number of un-identified Christians. Many of these were included in the new organization. The plan of work that had been followed by the First church officers, was to include all the organizations of the city under one official head at that church. The West Lincoln congregation and chapel were so managed.

When property was purchased for the East Lincoln work, the same plan was in force, but at the urgent appeal of Mr. Hemry and C. C. Munson, it was deeded to Mr. Munson and Mr. Hemry and held by them until the first building was erected, when with the consent of the First church board, a second congregation was organized with a full corps of officers, and received from Munson and Hemry a



title to the property. This was in March 1889, and at that time Mr. Hemry and family severed their connection with the First church and went into the new congregation as charter members.

Probably late in the summer of 1888 a Bible School was started, meeting in a vacant store room on 27th near Vine streets. The Ewan family, Mrs. Caldwell, John Bicknell, then working in the Burlington offices, two university students, Mr. Crosby and Mr. Neihart with the Hemry's, were among those interested in starting the school. The school was subject to changes in business and had to move from one vacant room to another, finally securing one on Vine, near 27th street which had been a meat market. They tackled the job of cleaning it for use and moved in.

In the latter part of 1889 it came to pass that there was no store room to be had. In the meantime a lot had been purchased as mentioned above, and under the leadership of R. W. Abberly, a student at Cotner, the matter of building on the lots was considered. Early one morning a carpenter named John Martin, came to the Hemry home, and offered to build the building if the membership would put up a small sum of money. Counsel with the others resulted in accepting the offer, and the house was built and occupied with joy. They had a home from which they could not be moved at the whim of business.

D. R. Dungan held a short meeting there not long after its completion adding several people to the number. The First church granted permission for any of its membership living in the territory of East Side church, to withdraw and unite with East Side. About seventy members took advantage of the permission. Among them were J. M. Cook, Mrs. Cook and Grace; E. T. Whittemore and family; the Maxwell family, the Oberlies family; the Ewan's and many others not remembered by the chronicler. Mrs. C. W. Hemry was chosen Superintendent of the Bible school serving for four years. L. C. Oberlies succeeded her with years of leadership, adding also his strong help in the music. Dr. S. M. Sherman and wife came soon after the church was built.

Coming into being just at the time when the finances of the country were becoming straitened, the work of supporting a new work after building even a modest house, was a difficult problem. At such a time the women of the Eastside church felt the stringency and with characteristic courage banded themselves together to help along the financial side of the church life. They organized a work society that functioned for years. For a long time they conducted an eating house at the state fair grounds during the days of the fair.

This was hard work but lucrative, and the money so gathered was a steady reserve for the church. They early took up also, the work of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, organizing an auxilliary in May 1891, which is still flourishing. Located near Cotner University, it was not difficult to secure a student for supply after that institution began its work, at first from the members of the faculty, and later from members of the students. R. W. Abberly of Cotner became the first regular minister, continuing for several years.

Those serving thereafter were G. J. Chapman and F. L. Pettit. J. W. Hilton labored for two years, 1901-02, and after him E. E. Boyd, four years; Z. O. Doward, three years; W. H. Zenor, and then again J. W. Hilton for ten years. In this period they projected a new house of worship, and built the basement and finished it for occupancy. Jack Leonard was called in 1921 serving four years. Under his ministry the superstructure was completed, making a most suitable and handsome building, modern in its appointments. The membership at this time is 675 resident.

Mention is made of some of the older members including N. C. Ryerson, the Barger family, Mrs. John Oberlies, the Henry's L. C. Oberlies and family, the Drummonds, Maxwells, S. J. Sherman and wife, C. H. Chase and family, H. W. Hickman and family.

Dr. G. J. P. Barger, medical missionary to the Congo at Bolenge, Africa, is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Barger of this church. His wife was Miss Myrtle King of Bethany.

O. A. Joneson was pastor in 1926, and in 1927 W. P. Hill was called to the work and is with the church at this writing.

LINCOLN THIRD—Wm. H. Vanderzee, a colored preacher of fine character and good ability began a mission work in Lincoln in 1897 among his own race. This was partially supported by the State Society, by gifts from the white churches in the city and by the personal work of Mr. Vanderzee. In 1902 they were meeting on C street near 9th, and it was known as Lincoln C street church, but later called Lincoln Third. Mr. Vanderzee labored for them soliciting funds here and there, both within and outside the city, preaching regularly and maintaining a Sunday school.

John McWilliams and his wife and their daughter Ruth, Anna and Ruth Vanderzee, A. J. Sellers, F. J. Stepney, David Stewart and others have been active members.

In 1906 the building was moved from C street to 23rd and P streets to get more nearly into the territory of its membership, and of other negro population whom they hoped to interest. Part of the expense



of the removal was borne by the Nebraska Christian Missionary Society, which organization helped to finance an evangelistic meeting held by William Alphin of Waco, Texas. Five were added during that meeting. John McWilliams and his wife, were very efficient and capable leaders, and when Mr. Vanderzee left the work they continued to carry on, for some years.

In June 1930 W. W. Mayle was called to the pastorate, supported in main by the State Society. The church is badly disrupted and this is an effort to save our only work among the colored people of this state.

**BOWER**—The Bower church in Jefferson County, north of Fairfield, had its beginning in work done by Lewis C. Baur, who settled in that community in 1869, then virgin prairie soil for many miles. No plow had bitten into the sod within four miles of Mr. Baur's homestead. While taking the necessary steps to locating his claim, he lodged with a man and his family named Armstrong, about four miles from his place. Mr. Armstrong, learning that his guest was a preacher, invited his neighbors to meet at his house the next Lord's day for worship, and they came from miles around, and Mr. Baur preached for them. This was June 6, 1869. Going back to Nebraska City, where he had left his family while on the trip west, he arranged for their transport and started to his claim the second week in August, accompanied by Theodore Johnson, who was searching for a homestead.

The first Lord's day after arriving again at Mr. Armstrong's, they attended a meeting some five miles east, held by the United Brethren people. This was conducted in an arbor constructed of tree branches and seated with boards. The purpose was to organize a church of the United Brethren faith. The preacher naturally explained the teachings of the church, and declared that Faith and Repentance were the only conditions of salvation.

Mr. Johnson, at the noon hour courteously inquired of the minister the scriptural grounds for the statement made. Being referred to Acts 2: 38, his attention was called to the requirement of baptism in that verse. Inevitably there was some discussion of the point raised, and finally Mr. Johnson was promised time at the close of the afternoon meeting to state his position, and if he could, prove that baptism was a condition of pardon. The offer was accepted and the scripture on the subject fully expounded.

In September Mr. Baur's family arrived and Mr. Johnson's wife came from Ohio three weeks later. The families lived together until the Johnson home was built on the homestead.

Meetings were held regularly every Lord's day in the home of Mr. Baur. In December they were asked to assist in organizing a United Brethren church during a meeting being held on Cub Creek, about eight miles east. Mr. Johnson declined, but offered to assist in preaching and leave the decision as to the church to be set up, to the people. This was not agreed to by the speaker, Mr. Allen, but as he failed to secure an organization, the meeting close.

Johnson preached at the next meeting and four persons made the good confession. The meeting was then taken to the Baur home, where Baur's eldest son also made the confession. The congregation was organized Sunday, January 2, 1870, with thirty-six members.

William Sumpter, a Congregational preacher of culture came from his home at Kidderminster, England, to this country, arriving in New York in September 1869, and after some months in Chicago made his way west to Fairbury, Nebraska. There he became acquainted with Theo. Johnson, the E. D. Gage family, and L. C. Baur. They welcomed the newcomer, and in time the question of religion came up naturally and Mr. Sumpter found it necessary to read anew his Bible, and particularly the gospels and Acts, with special reference to the action and design of baptism. After a few months both he and his wife were immersed. He began to preach at once, and with added power.

The meetings in the homes gave way to more public services in the school houses as these were builded. The first ones were sod houses of course, and very comfortable both in winter and in summer. The members of the church included the E. D. Gage family, Theo. Johnson and wife, the Armstrongs, the Barnes, Martin, Shindell, Hanchett, Stacey, Himitt, and Sutton families and others.

They passed through the grasshopper periods, and all other privation incident to life in the state in those early days. The preaching at the first was done by Johnson, Baur, and Sumpter. The first school house was on what was later known as the Nealfanter farm. When the school was moved to West Bower, the services were held there.

In 1874 James McGuire, from Kansas held a revival meeting in the east Bower school building. After this Mr. Sumpter preached regularly for the church, and in 1880 the church services were taken again to East Bower school, and continued there until the meeting house was built in 1884 at the present location. The dedication was led by R. C. Barrow May 11, 1884.

J. S. Rhodes, who lived at Beatrice, preached regularly for the church for a time, driving across country. They paid him \$150 per



In the fall of that year L. J. Correll came to the settlement, and both he and C. J. Rhodes preached to the soldiers and citizens in the barracks. The Lord's Supper was observed for the first time in October 1869. Correll and Rhodes continued to preach alternately throughout the winter, and in the spring a number of other members of the Christian church arrived, among them being Jacob Hendershot.

The congregation was organized at the home of Mrs. Laura Rawson, July 8, 1870, with the following charter members: L. J. Correll, Marie Correll, Nellie Correll, A. E. Gates, Jacob Hendershot, Delana Hendershot, Angie E. Hendershot, Matilda Hendershot, F. J. Hendershot, W. T. Harding, Mary T. Harding, H. P. Harding, Samira Potter, Ithamer Pew, Jennie Pew, Laura Rawson, Weltha Rawson, Ida Rawson, Ella Rawson, C. J. Rhodes, and Emaline Rhodes. The elders chosen were Jacob Hendershot, C. J. Rhodes, L. J. Correll. Deacons, W. T. Harding, F. J. Hendershot, A. E. Gates. Clerk, F. J. Hendershot, Treasurer, A. E. Gates. The elders alternated in preaching until the fall of 1872, when Wm. Sumpter was called for a year.

A revival was held during that year, with Baur and Johnson aiding Mr. Sumpter, who walked the thirty miles from his home at Bowser. In 1874 Mr. Barrow came to them for a meeting which resulted in twelve additions.

The legal organization of the church was effected February 13, 1875, being necessary because of having acquired real estate. The trustees then chosen were Albert E. Gates, Laban Fisher, and Henry H. Hersh. The first building was of limestone and was erected in 1877, on the site of the present church, during the ministry of Charles Rowe. Judge Geo. Lobingier preached every two weeks for a time.

In common with the practice of practically all of the Christian churches Hebron set up a Sunday School, beginning it May 1, 1871. In later years and at the present, the Bible School more often precedes the setting up of the church organization. This school was also started in the home of Mrs. Laura Rawson, with F. J. Hendershot superintendent. The labors of Mr. Hendershot with this church were most abundant and continuous, perhaps in excess of that of any other. Mr. Correll took the occasion of preaching elsewhere at times, but Mr. Hendershot was a constant watchman on the walls.

The second church building was erected in 1889, during the ministry of W. T. Hacker. Other preachers who have served the church

were, C. M. McCurdy, A. B. McFarlane, and R. A. Schell, whose tenure continued from 1898 to 1905. A long period of development and growth. The membership grew from 182 to 375, and the Bible school from 67 to 230 during his ministry. E. C. Davis, F. T. Ray, W. E. Brandenburg, Ira E. Carney, Carl R. Per Lee, F. E. Day, J. J. Rupert, and Glen C. Moore, have served the church.

The enterprise of setting up a Christian Church school was not carried forward. Just why no beginning was made is not clear.

At the time of the observance of the 50th anniversary of the church in January 1920. H. A. Hendershot spoke on the founding of the church, and the above is based upon what he afterward wrote, and the remembrances of R. C. Barrow. The church at that time numbered 243. He also reported that D. W. Harding was the only surviving charter member at that date. He has since deceased. The roster of the church during the years contained many names of very active people. Some of them have been called home, and others still living. Some of these have carried their faithful devotion to other churches in other, and sometimes pioneer, fields. Among this later group will be found J. T. Ingraham, F. W. Powell, C. M. Wetherald, F. M. Wetherald, B. W. Hess, H. A. Hendershot, and their families, and F. Macey. Of these H. A. Hendershot, still lives in Hebron. Mrs. Hendershot is the daughter of Charles Rowe, under whose ministry the first church was built.

Evangelistic meetings have been held by the following, and probably in the order named; Sumpster, Johnson and Baur together. R. C. Barrow, G. H. Exley, U. M. Browder, C. B. Lotspeich, Morgan Morgans, Wilson, Dutcher, Moore, Boyle, Young, Putman, Vawter, Whiston, Evans and S. M. Martin. This church has been a prominent influence in the community and has had its part in the general work of the brotherhood.

#### INDIAN RAID AT HEBRON-

Mention has been made in connection with the history of the Hebron church, of Indian raids in that vicinity. Of one that was directly repulsed by the people living there. It has been a common idea that Laura Roper, a 16 year old girl, was captured by the Indians a few miles from Hebron and held for ransom, being badly mistreated. It is definitely stated by the lady herself, now Mrs. Laura Roper Vance, of Enid Oklahoma, when in her 82nd year, that the place was a few miles west of Oak in Nuckolls County, at a bluff on the Little Blue river, called "The Narrows," and that her detention was not quite



three months.

She was captured August 7, 1868, and taken to an army post or camp in October of that year. She reports that she was not mistreated, but lived among the girls. The history of this and the great Indian raids of which it was a part, is a matter of record by the Nebraska State Historical society.

In this connection it is germane to say that the decision of Mr. Berry, who came as the first evangelist sent out by the General society at Cincinnati, to return to the east, is not at all strange. This last stand of the Indians to drive out the whites who were taking away their homes, covering several years, and requiring a strong force of troops to quell, was no light matter. If they had succeeded in these western counties, they would have soon been attacking the river towns. The Cheyennes, Brules, Apaches, Missouri Sioux, Arapahoes, Ogalalas, and Kiowas were allied in this heroic effort to stop the encroachments of the whites in the wide sweep of prairies between the Arkansas and Platte rivers.

Such chiefs as Logan, Black Hawk, Red Cloud and Roman Nose were at the head. They raided homes, killed many persons, drove off the stock and burned the property, of the scattered settlers. It was all planned so carefully that it broke out most unexpectedly in many places. News of these raids reached the Missouri river towns via of the fleeing refugees and doubtless the stories of the atrocities lost nothing in their repetition, though they were enough in themselves to make the stoutest hearted uneasy, even at that distance. The pioneers who were in jeopardy of their lives and properties, were yet heroic enough to make plans for the Lord's work in their communities.

**CHARTER OAK**—This rural church in Nemaha County was established March 23, 1868, by R. C. Barrow, State Evangelist. Their meetings were held in the Grant school house which was also used by the Methodists. The little congregation was weak, but by 1870 there had been arrivals in the community of a number of Christian people, and a reorganization was effected May 28, 1870, with R. V. Black and Jesse Merrill as elders, and G. W. Smedley and W. E. Sive-wright as deacons.

In 1871 a new school house was built about a mile from the present site of the church building, and the Christian church moved to it and continued there until some years later they were able to build a church house, and it was christened The Charter Oak church, the name that had been applied to the school.

Cyrus Alton held the first revival meeting after the organization at which Barrow did the preaching. Mr. Barrow was present at the time of the re-organization also. A few of those early members were James G. Ewan and wife, J. D. Elliott and wife, J. W. Harris and wife, James Starr, Emily McGowan, Grant S. House, R. V. Black and wife, G. W. Smedley and wife, Jesse Merrill and wife, and W. E. Sivewright, Geo. E. Peterson and family.

John Truax, R. C. Barrow and Jas. G. Ewan were the first preachers. After them were Cyrus Alton, J. E. Harris, C. R. Skinner, W. J. Burner, C. F. Bently, T. D. Read, E. J. Sias, W. D. Mellinger, C. W. Cooper, Harvey Johnson, A. W. Rethemeyer, Prof. L. P. Bush, Harry Hill, A. W. Osterhout, Prof. E. E. Smith, E. D. Hageman, A. F. Motter, and Yandell Beans. In 1929 its membership was 72 resident, and its Bible School 75. It has sent many good workers into other churches. E. C. Davis is the preacher at this time.

VERDON—A. W. Frank, one of the veterans of the Verdon church, and Mrs. Camma Hall Turner, have furnished the basis for this brief sketch of the Verdon church. Good brother Frank, then outside the kingdom, heard Dungan and Barrow when they had preached at Salem in 1865.

He recalls a funeral sermon by Dungan at that place, and reports that the preacher "fired hot shot into copperheads there in good shape." Those days were just as the civil war was closing and the heat of it was yet very intense.

In the summer of 1866 Mr. Barrow held a meeting on the river bottom\* below St. Deroin, and formed a small organization that has disappeared. According to his memory, Mr. Frank drove to the place to find Barrow in February, 1867, and took him to his home near the present site of Verdon. A meeting was held in a little school house and three were baptized. Mrs. Turner cites the fact that Barrow preached in what was known as the McElroy school house south east of Verdon. At this time her mother, Mrs. Hall, made the good confession and was baptized. She may well have been one of the three mentioned by Mr. Frank, and Frank himself was another. Mr. Hall had been a disciple in Illinois.

The following summer Barrow came and held meetings occasionally, and finally completed an organization with Elvin Owen and A. W. Frank as elders, and William Owen, Solomon Boiles and C. C. Sloan as deacons. The group later on held their meetings in what was called the Emory school house, south east of Verdon, having preaching



as they could.

\* \* First impressions might lead one to think that the "River Bottom" organization mentioned by Frank, might be the Barada church, but Barrow says he organized that church in 1872. If Mr. Frank's memory was good in 1903, there must have been another organization on the river bottom somewhere below Barada.

E. D.

In 1882, the town of Verdon was laid out. Just when the congregation moved into the village, is not known to this writer, but it is related that they built a house of worship in the east part of town. They continued to meet there until comparatively recent years.

An opportunity came to purchase the Evangelical church building, which was better located, and the congregation bought it, occupied it at once, and are still using it. The old building was sold and remodeled into a residence.

Among the men who have ministered there besides Mr. Barrows can be mentioned D. W. Shurtlieff, J. F. Berry, J. Mad. Williams, W. H. Winters, A. W. Henry, J. D. Howe, Geo. C. Ritchey, H. A. Lemon, H. J. Kennedy, H. A. Pallister, A. J. Wright, W. A. Morrison, Aaron Prince Aten, R. E. Hunt, A. L. Ogden, F. E. Day, F. E. Blanchard, C. M. Ewers, Loren Dunton, W. W. Kratzer, W. W. Stanley, and C. E. Hagee.

The names of many of the earliest members are not assuredly known, but besides those named above will be found the families of the Halls, Voils, Kieler, Timmerman, Evans, Crouch, Fuller and others. The present membership is listed at 85 resident and 15 non-resident.

BARADA—There were eight disciples living in the neighborhood of Barada east of the present town of Shubert and south of Deroine, in 1872 and earlier. Clark Braden and John Truax preached there at different times, and Mr. Phelps once a month for about six months. Mr. Barrow visited the place in the summer of 1872 with Truax, and held a brief meeting and three were added to the little group by statement from denominational churches. The following November he returned for a more extended meeting, which resulted in 34 additions.

Mr. Barrow writes of the log school house where the meetings were held, being well ventilated, the chinking between the logs having disappeared in spots. The congregation was a moving one, about half moving away from the stove and the other half moving to get near to it. An aged Methodist minister, Stephen Fairchild, was one of those immersed.

No history of the work of this congregation is at hand. Its name appears on the list of churches as late as 1894, in the Nebraska year book. Thereafter it is missing.

**STERLING**—The first to preach the plea of the disciples of Christ for the restoration of the Apostolic church, in doctrine, life and fruits, at Sterling in Johnson County, was T. Q. Matthews, who came from Iowa in 1871 and settled in that community. The next year in June, Mr. Barrows held a meeting and organized a church with T. Q. Matthews as elder and T. C. Lee as deacon. Mr. Matthews continued to preach every two weeks thereafter for some time.

The town had only been platted about a year, and the first few years the growth was slow. No record of information is at hand of the work until in 1889. By the collaboration of Miss Ella Henthorn and J. W. Hilton the major part of the following facts have been obtained.

T. J. Oliver, then living at Bethany, visited the place and among other Christians found the family of N. W. Henderson. Arrangements were made and services begun in the Baptist church that year. Mr. Oliver started to hold a protracted meeting in January 1890, but illness prevented his continuing and Marion Boles was called to finish the meeting. This resulted in the formal organization in February. Mr. Oliver gathered sixteen people together, and the meeting brought in thirty-three additions, which made up a membership for the little church of forty-nine.

The first thirteen of these were N. W. Henderson, Mrs. Henderson, H. W. Merrill, Mrs. Merrill, T. C. Lee, Mrs. Lee, Lou Smith, Mrs. Smith, John Macey, Mrs. Macey, George Wolf, Mrs. Wolf and Mrs. Wm. Eames, who were the moving spirits in the organization and progress of the church. The officers chosen at that time were Elder. N. W. Henderson; Deacons, T. C. Lee and H. W. Merrill; church clerk, John Borland.

The early preachers of this later organization were T. J. Oliver, Marion Boles, evangelist, C. H. Bass, John T. Smith, John W. Hilton, who served 1892-1895, D. W. O'Hern, 1895-1896, Thomas A. Maxwell, 1897, Duncan McFarlane in 1898, Maxwell 1899-1900, L. P. Bush, 1901, and George Aydelotte, 1902. During these and later years Geo. Wolf Jr. appears as a constant supporter as also Miss Henthorn.

There followed a period of inactivity, and in the year of 1908 the state secretary made a visit to the church over a Lord's day and it resulted in the calling of Bert Wilson, a student of Cotner, as regul-



ar supply. Plans were laid for a meeting by the Whistons and Longman for an intensive evangelistic campaign in the state tent. Almost perpetual rains made the tent useless and the meeting was taken into the church building. It did not accomplish what was hoped, a real and substantial revival of the work. Mr. Wilson worked throughout the summer but resigned in the fall.

This was followed by irregular preaching until the hearts of even the bravest few melted within them. Those men who followed Mr. Wilson, A. J. Hargett, Ross Williams, and T. V. Hubbel, were not able to stop the disintegration, caused in part by removals and discouragement.

There was a fairly strong undercurrent of feeling among the members and their friends, that it would be better to go into the Baptist church, which was stronger, and among whose members were warm friends of those in the Christian organization, than to try to keep the Christian church in operation. This had its influence. Since 1918 no organization has been reported. They had built a comfortable and worthy church house, very well located. The church building was sold in 1918, the net proceeds being covered into the N. C. M. S. Trust Fund, totaling \$1050.65.

**BEATRICE**—In May 1868, R. C. Barrow held the first meeting by a Christian preacher, ever held in Beatrice. It was held in a school house. The only disciples residing there at that time were John Tripp and wife, later living in Wilber. The fruits of the meeting were the baptism of Dr. H. M. Reynolds and his wife, a Mrs. Harrington, a young man, and Mrs. Emily O. Snow. Dungan held a short meeting not long afterward, and in July Barrow held his second meeting, baptizing three; and he visited them again in August adding three more.

In the summer of 1871 a number of other disciples settled there, including John C. Past and wife from New Castle, Indiana, William Bradt and wife from Rockford, Illinois, and John L. Rhodes and wife from North English, Iowa. Mr. Past attended the state meeting at Lincoln in the fall of 1872, and arranged with John W. Allen to hold a meeting for the little group, who returned with Mr. Past from the convention.

After about two weeks of meeting the church was organized with twenty members. Illness in his family called Mr. Allen home and D. R. Dungan came to continue the meeting. No further additions resulted. There was one baptism during the Allen meeting, and

John Ellis of El Paso, Illinois, united by letter.

Without doubt, while all of these first disciples were of stable character, the two men, John L. Rhodes, and John Ellis were continuously the stalwarts in that congregation for the most part of its history. Mr. Rhodes was a farmer-preacher of ability and courage. He not only had leadership in the home church, but he was found preaching here and there in that part of the state in many places. His name appears among the list of preachers serving the churches within reach.

Mr. Ellis was a man of fine business ability and by this he was able to guide the Beatrice congregation into sound business methods. His devotion to the cause was evidenced by his presentation of his letter on the second Lord's day after it was dated.

The board of officers chosen were John C. Past, and William Bradt, elders, and Dr. H. M. Reynolds and John L. Rhodes deacons. Mr. Past was a preacher of ability, and a capable expounder of the scriptures. J. Mad. Williams of Oskaloosa, Iowa, was called to be their minister, and he began his work in the spring of 1873. He ministered there two and a half years, closing in October 1875. His life and leadership were just what a new church needed. The church services were held in the Reynolds and Townsend hall at Court and fifth streets, the use of which was donated. In the year 1874 a lot was purchased for \$250.00 at Sixth and Ella streets, and the deed thereto was made to "The Disciples of Christ," which was evidently the name of the incorporation. Later it was called the First Christian Church. The first board of trustees were J. Mad. Williams, William Bradt Jr., John L. Rhodes, and John C. Past. The trustees proceeded at once to build a structure 28x42 feet, with an addition 10x12 for robing rooms, and a baptistery under the pulpit.

Chancellor A. R. Benton of the University of Nebraska gave the address on dedication day. About \$800.00 was needed to be raised to finish paying for the building. Grasshoppers and drouth made the payments most difficult. This financial situation compelled the church to accept William's resignation in October 1875. The loss of Dr. Reynolds by death during this time was a blow to the work of the church. A liberal payer and a wholesome Christian worker, they missed him sadly.

Of course the church organized a Sunday School which grew with the church, under the superintendency of John L. Rhodes. During this time the church met regularly and carried on. The board had



lost two trustees by death and one by removal, and at a business meeting A. L. Snow, G. W. Hinkle and John Ellis Jr. were elected trustees. Samuel C. Sheldon and Z. H. Howe were elected deacons and Rosanna Bradt, Emily Snow, Julia Shaw, and Belle I. Rhodes were chosen to serve as deaconesses.

Those uniting with the church during this period included J. N. Grant, Jane Brandon, J. S. Hagans and wife, and John H. Martin, the last coming from the Glen Rock Church; Chas. L. Schell and wife, and daughters Lottie and Minnie, Frank M. Lowe and Mrs. Millie Lowe, mother of Frank, Ora Lowe, and Onie Lowe.

The church was cared for by the elders for a period of five years. The church debt was paid off during this time. Samuel and Joseph Lowe located there about 1880 and preached for the church occasionally. In a short meeting held by Samuel Lowe, R. W. Grant and T. E. Wilson were added among others. Joseph Lowe was called to the pastorate.

A ladies Aid Society was organized during Williams' services, and it became not only a financial helper but a social influence of great value. Later on in 1884, the Christian Women's Board of Missions Auxiliary was formed, and both these organizations have continued to the present.

That the eldership did not appreciate their scriptural powers is evidenced by the incident of two Sunday School pupils desiring to confess their faith and be baptized. The elders chose to call Lewis Baur the farmer-preacher of the Bower church who came and preached, took the confessions and baptized the girls, Ollie and Sarah Grant.

In the spring of 1882 William C. Springer was called as pastor, and served for two years. During this time a good many were added to the church membership roll, among them being J. C. Bozarth and wife, S. B. Dooley, wife and daughter Effie and W. H. Tienor. He received a \$600.00 salary and was the first full time preacher after Mr. Williams. He did some missionary work in the vicinity of Odell bringing a number into the church two of them being preachers, S. W. Richardson and J. W. Porter, from the Christian Church, those followers of Barton W. Stone who did not join the movement led by the Campbells.

After Mr. Springer, Eli Fisher of Illinois was called in 1884. He was an energetic worker, and his wife, Anna Bradbury Fisher, was most gifted and efficient. They received many into the church. Mrs. Fisher organized the C. W. B. M. and also a young people's prayer

meeting, forerunner of the Y. P. S. C. E. of later years. W. H. Gillaspie, wife and son, C. C. Gillaspie and two daughters Nettie and Emma came at this time. Professor M. S. Calvin and wife came in 1884 and lent great help by his musical ability. A meeting was held by D. R. Lucas in 1885, and Dr. J. S. McCleery came into the church, his wife already being a member. John Lindsay of Eureka, Illinois, held a meeting also.

The first parsonage was built on the church lot to the east during Mr. Fisher's ministry. The church membership was 125 at the close of his work in 1886.

R. H. Ingram succeeded Fisher, in September 1886, and his tenure of service lasted until May 1893. At this time John Ellis was chairman of the board, J. S. McCleery clerk, W. H. Gillaspie treasurer. Under Ingram's administration there were 600 additions. About half of them moved away during the period, leaving 460 names on the register.

Several protracted meetings were held during Mr. Ingram's term. One by M. F. Redlein, in 1887, the second by C. B. Lotspeich, then pastor at Wymore, in February 1888. a third by himself in January 1889, adding about thirty. The membership now more than filled the church's capacity. An addition 32x44 was added to the north end of the building. This structure stood where the Post Office is now located. At the same time a lot had been purchased on the southeast corner of the same block for \$2,000.00.

The remodeled building was dedicated by F. M. Rains in October 1889. Evangelist A. C. McKeever was called for the fourth revival meeting, lasting six weeks and sixty-nine were added. N. K. Griggs united with the church at this time. He was later very active in Lincoln First church. In the summer of 1891. the church sold their lot on which the church stood to the Post Office department for \$8 200.00. The location on the southeast corner was prepared and a stone basement built, upon which to place the old building. The basement afforded additional room.

A meeting by T. M. Myers in 1892 added forty and a return meeting by McKeever in January 1893 added 69. Two hundred fifty-five were added in the seven revival meetings and three hundred and forty-five in regular services during the Ingram ministry, twenty-five came in the last month.

A church was established by him at Odell during his pastorate, with seventy-one members. He did the same at Filley following a



short meeting there, with twenty-one members. The salary grew from \$900.00 to \$1200.00 and parsonage.

R. G. White of Washington, Pennsylvania spent a month with the church and D. T. Hughes, one of the elders supplied for a time. J. C. Dabney, of Illinois became the pastor October 15, 1893 and remained two years. He did some evangelizing at Freeman, about three miles northeast, adding a score to that little congregation. A. G. McKeever being open to engagement as a pastor, the church called him to succeed Mr. Dabney, and he began the Lord's day following the close of Mr. Dabney's work.

At this time the finance committee presented some recommendations to the board looking to inaugurating a more effective system of finance. It urged a meeting of the whole membership at the annual election time at which time a full report of the finances and work of the church would be read. A set of rules for the government of the board were suggested. J. E. Cobbey was added to the eldership and was also the chairman of the board.

Mr. McKeever resigned his work in May 1896, to accept a call to the presidency of Bethany college, and F. A. Bright of Sharon, Pennsylvania was called to succeed him beginning his work July 1. The membership at that time was about four hundred. D. A. Wickizer followed Mr. Bright in 1899 and after him came Edgar Price in 1902, who remained until 1905.

Under all of these men the church maintained its high standard of work in all of its departments and occupied a leading place in the city and community. J. E. Davis of Stanbury, Missouri, succeeded Mr. Price in 1906. During his ministry the church erected a new house of worship on the site of the old one which was razed. It is modern in its appointments and construction, and is a most sightly and beautiful building. It is one of the largest and best buildings among the disciples in this state. The new church was dedicated following a week of services with pastors of various churches in the state speaking every night. F. M. Rains was speaker at the dedication service, November 24, 1907. Charles Reign Seoville followed the dedication shortly in a great meeting adding many to the local church and some to churches near by.

A new parsonage was constructed at the north of the building. C. F. Stevens served from 1910 to 1915 when he resigned to accept the pastorate of the Bethany church. W. W. Burk succeeded him for about two years and after him M. Lee Sorey from 1921 to 1924. The

present pastor is C. O. Stuckenbruck who came to the work in 1925, from a successful pastorate in Council Bluffs.

The church has the second largest membership in the state, being 1,080 in 1930 and is in the front rank of the strongest churches among us. Its missionary enterprises are large and its state and national influence ranks with the best. Locally it still holds a commanding place among the churches of the city. It has met and solved its problems without splits in its ranks. Differences will always be in any growing church among the disciples, for we are exceedingly democratic; but the Beatrice congregation has been able to pass thru all of these with practically a united front.

A modern educational unit has just been added at a cost of about \$40,000.00.

**FAIRBURY**—During the time that the Bower church was being established, the men leading in that church were not unmindful of the village of Fairbury eight or nine miles south. In 1871 Theodore Johnson met a small group of disciples there, and effected an organization with the following charter members, Dr. and Mrs. A. W. Showalter, John R. Brown, Henry O. Showalter and wife, Thomas Ward-en and one other. That Johnson preached to them and all who would gather is quite certain. They believed in preaching as a means of bringing people to the knowledge that would lead to salvation. These meetings were held, probably in the homes and at the school house. The organization first set up was discontinued but in the winter of 1873 it was organized with the following members; Dr. and Mrs. A. W. Showalter, Mr. and Mrs. George Welch, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Nelson, Barbara Showalter and Mrs. Thomas Kirk. Dr. Showalter and J. R. Nelson were named as elders and Henry O. Showalter and George Welch as deacons. They held their meetings for worship in the homes, and began to plan for a church building, and they pushed the venture so vigorously that in the spring of 1874 they erected their first meeting house on lots 11, and 12 in block 29 original town of Fairbury. It cost \$1,500.00 and was constructed by William Showalter.

J. Mad Williams, then preaching at Beatrice as its first regular pastor dedicated the building on the fourth Lord's day in July, 1874. They were now safely located and the work began to take on an appearance of permanency, which never disappeared. Mr. Johnson always kept an interest in the church and preached for them at times. Wm. Sumpter, newly come from England and converted to the plea of the disciples, frequently preached there while living on his farm at



## Bower.

Though they did not maintain a regular preacher, Dr. Showalter was a teaching elder. In fact he led and taught the little flock so efficiently that they were regular in assembling themselves together, in the fellowship, and breaking the loaf and the prayers. There were not so many ways of being entertained those days and those able and willing to teach were not without an audience because of lack of forensic ability. Churches in the pioneer communities could live and grow with very little preaching. Most of them at their best had only half time for a number of years and often only once a month. In such case the preacher would arrive on Saturday, preach that night, the next morning, and again at night, and quite often in the afternoon following a basket dinner in the church or nearby grove.

The first regular preacher was James McGuire, and he visited them once each month for a year. Following him John L. Rhodes, elder of the church in Beatrice, and a preacher of ability was called for a year. He gave half time to Fairbury and half to Bower. He served the church three years to the strengthening and edification of the church membership. The old building grew too small during his ministry and it was enlarged by additions to both north and south sides and thus doubling the capacity.

In the fall of 1889, M. T. Hough served as pastor for one year, and W. T. Hacker came in 1890, serving for two years. Sherman Kirk was called in 1892, laboring with them until 1895. During his service a new and commodious brick veener building was erected and it is still in use. The cornerstone of this building was laid July 25, 1894, and D. R. Dungan delivered the address on that occasion.

There were a number of protracted meetings held during this period of the church's life that added strength to the work. A. C. McKeever held a meeting in 1899 with fifty added to the church. .... Hansen of Missouri in 1901 added 35 more, and a year later McKeever held a second series of meetings adding five, and stimulating the church to the necessity of providing a better workshop for the church in its enlarged program and increasing membership. He urged a change of location which would place the church in a better relation to the residence section.

In February 1894, Melvin Putman, was called for an evangelistic meeting, and it proved to be a great ingathering for the church. One-hundred seventy-nine were added to the 185 then on the roll, the greatest meeting ever held by that congregation, and up to that date the largest held by any of the Christian churches in the state. Under

the impulse of this meeting the task of building a suitable church house on the present site was begun with vigor, and November 4, 1894 it was dedicated by Dr. J. H. Garrison editor of the Christian Evangelist at St. Louis, Missouri. The building and equipment cost \$12,500.00, and the \$3,000.00 needed to clear it of debt was readily pledged.

Following Mr. Kirk's pastorate the church has been served by F. M. Collins for about two years. Dr. Albert Buxton for a year or more. William Oeschger who continued for three years, and was followed by Harry C. Holmes whose fruitful ministry of five years added more than 400 to the church roll. He was a most popular personality, and he loved the people of the church and community. When he was called from earthly labor in his pastorate at Watsonville, California July 2, 1914, his body was brought to Fairbury for interment, as was that of Mrs. Holmes a few years ago.

Thomas Maxwell followed Mr. Holmes. His intense scriptural preaching and devotion to his work made his work exceptionally constructive. He served for four and a half years, closing his work because of ill health. In April 1913, J. K. Shellenberger was called to the work, leaving it to accept a place on the faculty of Cotner College in the fall of 1919. C. C. Buckner succeeded him and remained for more than four years. Both these last named preachers led the church in growing spiritual power. L. A. Brumbaugh began a most successful ministry in 1924, closing it in 1929, the present pastor, 1930, is Roy E. Deadman. The membership is 603.

Evangelists that have held meetings in this later period, are as follows: J. A. L. Romig, during the pastorate of F. M. Collins, with forty added. Two meetings were held during Holmes' ministry. one by Harry G. Hill. Allan Wilson and Will F. Linnt held a great meeting that was especially effective in reaching large numbers of men. Forty of these responded at one men's meeting, and 260 was the total number of additions. A union meeting resulted in 241 additions to the Christian church while Mr. Shellenberger was pastor.

Fairbury has always given hearty support to the Bible School work. It was first organized in a little school house in 1872, J. R. Nelson the first superintendent. J. C. McLucas was superintendent continuously, save for one year, for nearly fifty years, and with such leaders it grew steadily in numbers and influence. Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. Shellenberger, as pastors largely increased and developed the adult classes, men's and women's. These were influential factors in the



social and civic life of the community. The advanced Bible class has been taught by W. H. McLucas since 1881 continuously. Mrs. J. D. Baum was for a long time teacher of the women's Bible class, and of course it was in no whit behind the men's classes in constructive influence.

The Fairbury church is conscientiously missionary. The missionary society has numbered 100 and better for a long time. The church has supported Miss Hallie Lemon in the Mexican work at San Antonio as their living link. State Missions is not forgotten by them either.

**FAIRFIELD**— So far as known the first settler in the vicinity of the present town of Fairfield, in Clay County, who belonged to the Christian church, was S. J. Anthony who homesteaded on section 12 in Township 5 North, Range 6 West. The next was Lorenzo C. Chapman and his wife, locating several miles to the northeast. After them came Worthy T. Newcomb and wife, Joseph Webb and wife and J. H. Astrup. Mr. Newcomb, a graduate of Hiram college in Ohio, having for a time engaged in preaching in the state of New York, took the lead in the activities looking toward the establishment of a church in the community. He with S. J. Anthony, undertook to be responsible for financing meetings as a preliminary to the organization. The places of meetings were in the neighborhood school houses.

As a result of these meetings an organization was set up in a school house located near where there is now a Farmers' grain elevator. This was June 16, 1878, and the following persons became the charter members: Joseph Webb, Hannah Webb, L. R. Chapman, Mrs. L. R. Chapman, W. T. Newcomb, Deette Newcomb, S. J. Anthony, and James H. Astrup. W. T. Newcomb and James H. Astrup were elected as Elders. Joseph Webb and S. J. Anthony elected as deacons. In the earlier business meetings, Joseph Webb acted as chairman, and S. J. Anthony as clerk. Credit is due to Mr. Anthony for the records of the early days of the church. He was exceptionally painstaking and accurate.

The regular meeting place, though not so stated, seems to have been in the Fairfield school house. The membership gradually increased by letters and baptisms until the last of September 1880 when 30 members were on the record. The first pastor was Judge Geo. Lobingier of Hebron, for half time, who served the church for a year. He was succeeded by William Sumpter who labored one year and nine months, and was followed by C. B. Lotspeich, who remained less than a year. All of these preachers gave half time to Fairfield

and the other half to Clay Center.

Before the calling of a regular pastor, and on the alternate Sundays W. T. Newcomb or his father, J. T. Newcomb, did the preaching. So that the services were regular and full time.

October 30, 1881, a meeting was called at the school house to effect a legal organization, and this was done under the name "The Christian Church of Fairfield, Nebraska." Three trustees were chosen, George Glass, Henry White and Frank Smith. Immediately after this the church purchased the school house for \$300.00. Of this amount \$180.00 was promptly raised and a committee named to have the house moved. A man from Edgar did his for \$70.00. It was taken to the site of the present building February 5, 1882. The record has this illuminating sentence: "For the first time we met in our own house, and although the room is much in need of repairs and presents a rather shabby appearance, it was satisfactory to know that it was our own; a comfort we had not enjoyed until now."

This building was moved off the lot in 1884, and after being used for a class room for two years was sold, and after wandering about town was finally purchased by the Catholic people and placed just opposite the Congregational church.

Up to this time, 1884, three special evangelistic meetings had been held. One by R. C. Barrow and two by D. R. Lucas, each of which seemed to be quite successful. The work however, required much sacrificial giving, the two brethren above mentioned as sharing the financial burden, paid \$80.00 for one of these meetings. This rather pathetic record is found as of the fall of 1882, "It was our purpose to complete our church building this fall, also to secure some good brother from abroad to preach for us. But we are now unable to do either." A most destructive hail storm had swept that section of the country from which the membership suffered heavy losses.

In October 1882, the Bible school is mentioned as being an established institution of the church. A meeting of the school had been called to consider repairing the building. Plaster, a new chimney, outside paint and repair windows. In spite of the untoward conditions, by April 1884 the church had an enrollment of 140, and the project of establishing a Christian College in Fairfield was launched.

This venture was primarily due to the vision of Worthy T. Newcomb, who foresaw that the rapidly increasing number of churches of the faith would out run the supply of prepared leaders, both in the ministry and in the Bible School work. He was an enthusiast and



communicated his spirit to some of his fellow workers in the church at Fairfield and elsewhere. The story of this college work is to find another place in this volume.

The immediate effect on the church was to add two families to the church population, those of O. C. Hubbell and Charles W. Hemry who came to take places on the faculty of the new college, Mr. Hemry as its President. Other families came also because of the advantages offered for higher education of their children. At once the leaders foresaw that a college church could not go on in the way the pioneer church had been doing. Young people would be coming to the town, and the building was not only inadequate as to size but wholly unrepresentative and unattractive. They set themselves to the task of building a new church house that would be suitable and worthy, with an audience room 34x56 feet, in the prevailing fashion of a plain rectangular edifice. This was dedicated in January, 1885, though there was still a debt of \$1,200.00.

The church grew rapidly during the next few years, due to the opening of the college work, in the old church building and several smaller frame buildings. When the new college building was completed in 1886 these buildings were sold, and the old church likewise. A Mite Society was formed by the ladies of the church in January 1883, which has later been called the Ladies Aid society and continues to function as a very dependable financial helper. The first mid-week prayer meeting was held in April, 1883.

It should be noted that in all the lines of activity in this early church its plans were not confined to the one congregation at Fairfield. Much of the time the evangelists were employed for Clay County, and occasionally a part of Nuckolls County was included. Such places as Clay Center, Edgar, and Deweese shared in the general progress.

The regular pastors of the Fairfield church have been George Lobingier, William Sumpter, C. B. Lotspeich, C. W. Hemry, A. J. Wright, William Prince Aylsworth, T. L. Fowler, O. C. Hubbel, L. R. McKinney, T. J. Williamson, J. J. Setliff, Simson Ely, J. P. Davis, L. A. Hussong, O. H. Truman, D. F. Snyder, H. C. Williams, Stephen J. Epler, T. A. Lindenmeyer, F. Grant Hamm, and L. R. Lundeen.

Evangelistic meetings have been held by W. T. Newcomb, J. T. Astrup, J. T. Newcomb, Mr. Burch, Ira Titus, O. C. Hubbell, C. W. Newcomb, father of W. T. Newcomb, R. C. Barrow, D. R. Lucas, J. B. Vawter, Ira J. Chase, Mrs. Clara Hazelrigg, John T. Smith, J. B. Johnson, M. L. Anthony, B. B. Burton, H. E. Wilhite, D. A. Cooksey, et al. The total number of names appearing on the record of the

church is 1,168. The membership at this time is 198 resident and 92 non-resident. Bishop M. Hopkins was their last minister.

The roll of the elders of the church includes W. T. Newcomb, J. H. Astrup, T. J. Newcomb, Mr. Burch, Ira Titus, O. C. Hubbell, C. W. Hemry, A. J. Mercer, L. R. Chapman, T. L. Fowler, Jacob Shively, J. B. Teagarden, J. M. Criley, W. J. Garvin, J. T. Jacobs, N. Williams, J. G. Riggs and T. R. Oldham.

During its most prosperous years a parsonage was built near the church, and the church building has been kept up to more modern requirements of the church school.

**HARVARD**—In October 1883, R. C. Barrow, state evangelist, held a meeting at the town of Harvard, finding there nearly twenty persons who were disciples. There were six added, and an organization was set up with 25 members. Apparently the formal organization was not effected until later. C. B. Lotspeich preached for half time from January to May in 1884. A meeting was held by D. R. Lucas in the skating rink in May 1884, and 25 were added. At the close, the G. A. R. hall was secured for regular services and the following officers chosen: C. Rockhill, G. LeBaron, A. H. Davis and L. Gaddis, elders; G. H. Spicer, William Moore, N. Smith, and J. C. Sherburn, deacons; Mrs. C. Rockhill and Mrs. M. W. Wilcox, deaconesses; Mrs. M. W. Wilcox, clerk.

The zeal of the membership is evidenced by the fact that while almost an entire year elapsed without a minister, there were seven more added to the church. Not only that, but it was apparent that a church building was begun, so that by the 7th of June 1885, they began worshipping in the new house. L. Penn Bush began preaching for the church in May of that year, and during the year until the next March, twelve had been added. In that month S. H. Hedrix, of Iowa, held a meeting, resulting in three additions. By the middle of September 14 more united with the church in the regular services.

Elder Davis having moved from the place, T. R. King was chosen to fill the vacancy. The office of J. C. Sherburn, deacon was declared vacant and J. Byran chosen to fill the place. Mrs. Byran and Mrs. T. H. Matters were elected as deaconesses. Byran, King and Matters were selected as trustees and C. Rockhill treasurer.

A. P. Cobb held a meeting in September 1886, resulting in 19 additions and ten more came in during Bush's second year of service. He closed his work in April 1887 and O. C. Hubbell was employed until a pastor could be secured. L. T. Van Cleve was called to the ministry in November 1887, serving until February 1889. During this time Morgan Morgans held a meeting adding eight. G. T. Black



and wife, Abram Davis and wife, Mrs. C. Eller, Orlando Mackey and wife, John Sperry and wife, Daniel Troxel and wife, Levina Troxel and Mrs. Mayhue Wildman. He organized a Sunday school and practically all the community attended who were disposed toward religion at all.

Mr. Newcomb held a revival meeting in the winter of 1875-76, and enough were added so that the total number came to twenty. It is most probable that the actual formal organization was effected at that time, though the record is not definite. This school house was located south of the present town site, which was not laid out until the summer of 1879, and the County seat was not finally located there till November of that year.

In the fall of 1876, J. T. Newcomb came from Hiram, Ohio following his son, W. T. Newcomb, and located in the County. He is credited with riding that distance on a pony. He held a debate with an Adventist preacher from Missouri on the issues dividing the two churches. They had fewer members in the church following the debate, but those remaining were stronger in the faith. W. T. Newcomb held a short meeting following the debate, and raised the number to 23. Mr. Newcomb asked to be relieved of the preaching later, and George Lobingier was employed to serve them for a year. He held meetings also, one in District Number 40 and another at the Randall school house. A number were added. He preached at the Lathrope school house at Inland, and other places. One family from the Lathrope work was that of Neri Smith.

Mr. Lobinger moved to Hebron and William Sumpter was called to the work, who added more than 75 to the membership. Just prior to his arrival, the new town site of Clay Center was platted and the site company offered lots free to any church that would agree to build and continue to maintain worship. The men of the church held a council to determine what to do. Of course they were anxious to accept the offer, but a canvass of the pocketbooks was disheartening to the extreme. The money was not to be had. But just at the darkest moment Daniel Troxel made what is said to be the "longest speech of his life." He said, "If you want a house in Clay Center, build it. I am not afraid to trust my brethren." And they did, and he did; to borrow a phrase.

The first county building in Clay Center was the jail, and the sheriff, J. P. Nixon, was a member of the Christian church. Services were moved into the jail while they were building a new church house. Lathing the church was made a family matter and the women and children all came and helped. Hammers were in-

sufficient so some of the women secured hard knots and nailed handles to them and used them for hammers. A picnic dinner was served and during the day a number of the Fairfield folks came and helped. The lathing was finished in one day.

Evidently R. C. Barrow must have dedicated the new house, as he is quoted as being very much relieved because there was no money to be raised, but rather bills were all paid and there was \$13.00 in the treasury. According to the history of Nebraska the house was 24x46 feet, cost \$1,200.00 and was built in 1880. This was the first church organization and church building in the new town of Clay Center. It occupied the same site as the present building.

C. B. Lotspeich took the work in 1883, and D. R. Lucas held a meeting for them. An Aid society was organized by the women of the church. Later on the C. W. B. M. was also formed, and its influence made that church an even more missionary organization than it was naturally. After Mr. Lotspeich left the work, students from Fairfield college supplied the pulpit.

J. H. Stark was called in 1887. A parsonage was needed and the money was not at hand in sufficient amounts. C. C. Eller, evidently in the same spirit that prompted Daniel Troxel to trust the brethren, mortgaged an eighty of land to provide the money for that first parsonage. It was an act of faith, though it was expressed in dollars and a mortgage. It would be expected that a man with such faith and liberality of soul would be found always at the fore in Christian work, and it was so. At Harvard, and still later in David City, Mr. Eller was one of the stable forces in the kingdom for years.

A. J. Wright became pastor in 1888 serving about a year and a half. R. A. Schell is mentioned as having filled the pulpit in 1890 and L. H. Humprey ministered from November 1891 to September 1892. D. W. Curtis took the work in 1894, and during his ministry William Sumpter held an excellent meeting, and Henry Frickett another. A meeting was held by Otha Wilkison and Frank McVey in the Court House, because of the lack of room in the church. O. J. Law and H. J. Kennedy supplied the pulpit in 1897-98, and W. B. Harter began a two years pastorate in the fall of the latter year. C. A. Gearhart, served less than a year and was followed by R. M. Shelton for about seventeen months. H. A. Lemon and Louis Epler held a meeting during that time. A. G. Smith was called in 1904 and ministered to them for nearly three and a half years.

In 1904 the church completed and dedicated a new church building and a new parsonage. It seems to have been a characteristic of



this church that it no sooner thought of a house in which to preach the gospel, than they also thought of a house in which the preacher might live. A. M. Haggard of Des Moines, Iowa, was called to dedicate the new church. The contract price for this was \$3,200.00 and \$1,370.00 was raised on dedication day for incidental expenses. The church membership was reported as 167 that year.

A meeting by John P. Jesse, and another by E. Von Forell added strength and vigor and later two other meetings, one by Simpson Ely, and another by Melvin Putman and Miss Egbert were held.

In 1908-09 the church supported E. Von Forell as an evangelist under the Nebraska Christian Missionary society, paying \$300.00 on his salary. He held meetings at Vesta, a church organized by the state society the year previous; Alliance; Scottsbluff, where the little church building has been used for several years for school purposes. Twenty disciples were there and he added ten others organizing both a church and a Bible School. Gering, where 33 were added, and a pastor D. A. Youtsy, called, Oak, a little church but a year old. Mitchell another church organized by the society a year before. A church house projected and Mr. Forell engaged to serve them as pastor, and give the other time to Scottsbluff. Altogether he added 33 by baptism and 53 by letter and statement.

In 1907 M. E. Miller accepted the call to the Clay Center church serving them most successfully for seven and a half years. Meetings were held during the time by Hamilton and Stewart, Charles Finch, B. B. Burton, and an exchange meeting by H. C. Williams of Fairfield. Ross Williams was pastor following Mr. Miller, for about two years and he was succeeded by E. W. Bowers for two years and G. P. Clark was called who remained until 1924. Frank J. Sanborn served for a time and at this writing A. W. Farmer is pastor.

Among the supporters of the work during the years appears the names of Boyd, Campbell, Kincaid, Thomas, Jessup, Detweiler Overstreet, Voris, Troxel, Epperson, Wray, Adams, Carey and Hanson.

