

CHURCHES OF GOD,
GENERAL CONFERENCE

Historical Society

CGGC
ARCHIVES MUSEUM
NEWS MAGAZINE



INNOVATE
NEW MEASURES NOW

Volume 36

Summer/Fall 2026

Number 2

Celebrating our Roots Among America's Founding Generation

by Dr. Rob Guy, Jr.



This summer, across America, communities are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, marking the official birth of the United States of America. Accordingly, many families will be tracing their connections back to early America, to their forebears and first generations of Americans, with some uncovering their connection to the founders themselves.

This monumental anniversary also provides an op-

portunity for us in the Churches of God to take a longer and broader look at our own history, to explore not only the young American republic into which John Winebrenner was born, but also the Pennsylvanian society which so significantly shaped our earliest members and congregations, and to reflect more fully on the deeper, broader rootedness that belongs to our shared heritage.

A few years back, while digging in the archives at

the Un. of Findlay “then Findlay College”, I came across an interesting document concerning John R. H. Latchaw, the first president of the University of Findlay. The document was simply one handwritten page which noted that, through his Ross family on his mother’s side, he was related to Betsy Ross, maker of the American flag, and to George Ross, the signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Though at first glance this page may appear of little interest, nothing more than merely a few skeletal details of Latchaw’s own family history, it offers us today an example of Findlay’s first president doing just that: reflecting upon his own background and probing the ways in which it might affirm and reinforce his own sense of identity and vocation. The document appears to have been hastily jotted down, as if to record details which emerged in conversation, most likely involving his mother. And yet also provides tangible evidence not only that Dr. Latchaw was aware of his ancestry, but also that he aimed to remember these particulars, writing them down to provide a point of reference for further inquiry and reflection.



John R. H. Latchaw, first president of Findlay College

There’s always more to the story! As those of us know who dabble in genealogy, what we know is typically but the tip of the iceberg, with further digging often yielding much more substance and color than we dare to imagine. Presi-

dent Latchaw was one of the most engaging and influential personalities within the Churches of God. In 1884, Latchaw was the natural choice to lead the college. He had taught school in Iowa and Minnesota and completed two degrees at

Hillsdale. He had also founded a classical academy in Barkeyville, Pennsylvania, designed to prepare students for college. By serving both institutions for the first year, he provided a natural bridge for many of the Churches of God’s students and educators to be directed to Findlay.

At the time, Latchaw was the youngest college president in America, and was not only a leading proponent for education for both men and women, but also for the combination of classical, scientific and professional studies, including business and the arts. In addition to helping bring to fruition the long-standing educational aspirations within the Churches of God, Latchaw also played a central role in launching our global reach into India, helping to lay the foundations for the holistic ministry that continues to thrive there today.

While denominational politics regrettably drove



CHRISTIAN BAPTISM FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

A Study in N. T. Diction

JOHN ROSS HARRIS LATCHAW, A.M., D.D.

I doubt if very many Bible students are really aware of the precision with which Jesus and the New Testament writers and speakers use language and terms to express their meaning, and make their hearers understand. I have always regarded Jesus as the *only perfect Teacher*, the *Model Par Excellence*, in all that pertains to the Subject, Matter and Method of teaching. He says of himself, "I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE." And Paul affirms that He is both the wisdom of God, and the power of God. He, therefore, knew both what he wanted to say, and how to say it. And I have never yet been able to detect a flaw in his presentation of truth, whether we consider truth itself, or the manner of presenting it. He was more than scientist, philosopher, theologian, artist: they dabble near the shore of the ocean that he created.

As a child he was found in the temple among the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, and astonished all with his questions and answers; as a man in his ministry he took a little child and set him in the midst of his disciples, and

Latchaw's publication on baptism, one of the few occasions where he printed his full name

L a t c h a w away from both Findlay College and the Churches of God, he continued to innovate and lead nonetheless, leaving a profound mark on education in the Midwest. After pursuing post-doctoral studies at the University of Chicago, he moved back to Ohio

and reopened Defiance College, which remains open to this day. He then launched a new institution in Muncie, Indiana, where he enlisted the support of the influential Ball brothers, laying the foundation for what became Ball State University. Following this he returned to Wilton, Iowa in an attempt to revive yet another struggling college.

While a small vestige of familiarity with Latchaw still lingers within the Churches of God, most of the details concerning his influential ministry and lasting influence have largely faded from our memory.

Latchaw's connection to the Ross family came through his maternal grandparents, John and Jane Ross, with both grandparents having Ross ancestry. Grandfather Ross was a contemporary of John Winebrenner, being born in 1793 in York County, Pennsylvania, just across the Mason-Dixon line from Wine-

brenner's Maryland birthplace. Grandfather Ross' father was a Revolutionary War veteran, but had died at a young age, depriving the family of a more complete knowledge of that Revolutionary generation.

Fortunately, Latchaw's grandfather had memories of his own in addition to those passed down through the family. One of his favorite stories to recount was the time George Washington came to his home when he was a boy, his father having served under Washington in the Revolutionary War. Grandfather Ross had a vivid memory of sitting on Washington's knee as the president reminisced with his father on their front porch.

Grandfather Ross would loom large in Latchaw's upbringing. It was he who led the Ross family into the Churches of God, responding to Winebrenner gospel-centered ministry at a meeting he conducted near Andersontown, Pennsylvania. Grandfather Ross also led the family migration into the west. They first settled in Venango County, Pennsylvania in 1839, starting a Church of God congregation under the leadership of John Hickernell. It was here that John Latchaw was born in 1851, in the budding Church of God village of Barkeyville, begun by his uncle, Henry Barkey.

When Latchaw was just two years old, his Grandfather Ross orches-



**Latchaw's grandmother,
Jane Ayers Ross**



**Grandfather Ross's
grave near their farm in
Cedar County, Iowa**

trated another move, leading the family down the Ohio River to the Mississippi on a flat boat, and establishing a new farm in Cedar County, Iowa, in 1853. Latchaw would spend his entire childhood in Iowa on a farm just down the road from his Grandfather Ross.

His mother, Ann Ross Latchaw, oversaw his early education, and he attended a small country school which impressed on him the importance not only of reading and writing and arithmetic, but of classical languages and literature, American history and civics, and other tools which fueled his quest for further study and equipped him for conscientious public service.

Latchaw's mother, Ann Ross, was born in 1829, when a measure of the family legacy remained in the collective memory. Her sister, Elizabeth Ross Kingston, according to the family lore, was nicknamed "Betsy," in honor of the famous seamstress, who had died just five years beforehand.

The accounts of Betsy Ross's involvements of flag making and other endeavors remained largely within the family until, in 1870, one grandson recounted to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania several of the stories she had confided to her children. The story of seamstress Betsy Ross was one that capti-



**Samuel and Ann Ross Latchaw, with
President Latchaw on the left**

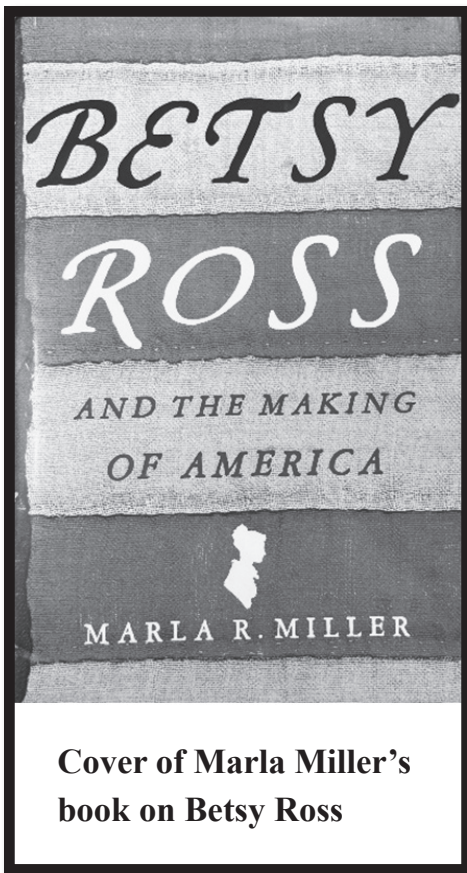
vated the nation during Latchaw's lifetime, gaining traction following the American centennial in 1876.

Unfortunately, many 20th Century historians have tended to dismiss the original Betsy Ross, having fixated on the conundrum of America's first flag, a controversy likely never to be settled with certainty.

As a result, she has been reduced by many to a mere caricature, her story treated as a mere fable. Historians have likewise done a disservice to the entire Ross family as well, who in the 18th century played a leading role among



**Betsy Ross Kingston with
her husband, Jacob**



**Cover of Marla Miller's
book on Betsy Ross**

Pennsylvania and Delaware's founding generation. The story of George Ross would likely have been completely forgotten, had he not been a "signer" of the Declaration of Independence.

But just where most historians tend to stop, leaving out

which were the size of a building involving more than a hundred thousand stitches, were flying all throughout America. A similar historical reduction is found in the story of George Ross, one of Pennsylvania's most active proponents of principled resistance to Parliament. His tireless service to the war effort led to the compromise of his health, and to his death during the American

Revolution at the age of forty-nine. Much more than a "signer," Ross had been elected as vice-President of Pennsylvania in 1776 alongside Benjamin Franklin as President. Having established an extensive legal practice in Lancaster for over a quarter of a century that extended deep into the frontier, George represented Lancaster's diverse population in the Pennsylvania Assembly. He established himself as a leading voice



**Portrait of the
seamstress Betsy
Ross by Samuel
Waldo, published
by her descendant,
John Harker**

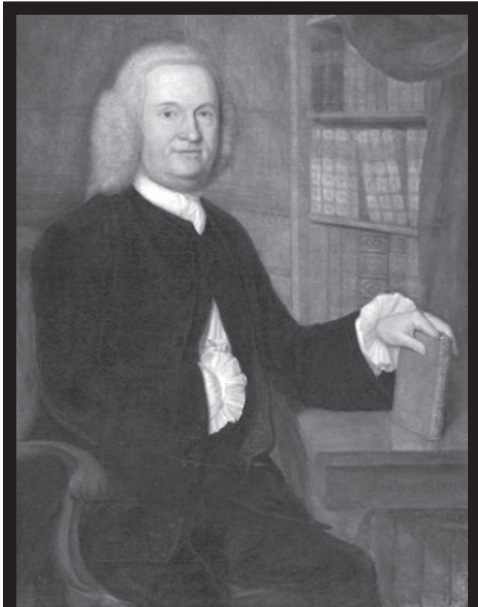
the most substantial aspects of the story, we realize we are just beginning to uncover its true grandeur! Fortunately for those of us within the Churches of God and at the University of Findlay, there truly is more to this story. Betsy Ross provides a spectacular case in point, as does George Ross, the "signer!"

As historian Marla Miller has recently noted, our dismissive and reductive use of historical sound bites often buries "richer and deeper understandings of the past." Miller has conducted extensive research on Betsy Ross, publishing her findings in the 2010 book, *Betsy Ross and the Making of America*, which fleshes out her noteworthy story in over four hundred pages and well-over a thousand footnotes.

She vividly details the extent of Betsy Ross' career as a major Philadelphia artisan, who over the course of several decades secures numerous contracts for the United States military as well as the Indian Department. By the War of 1812, her flags, some of



**Attorney George Ross, the
signer, by Benjamin West**



**The honorable John Ross
by Cosmo Alexander**

critiquing Parliament's overreach of authority, and was instrumental in crafting Pennsylvania's Declaration of Rights, as well as addressing the deplorable British treatment of American prisoners of war.

General of the Lower Counties, now Delaware. John spent several years in the Pennsylvania Assembly, becoming a friend and political ally to Benjamin Franklin. Over the years, he would serve as mentor to many young men entering the legal profession, including many within his own family.

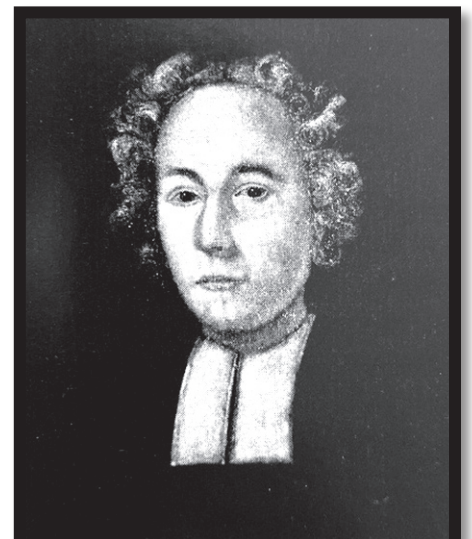
The roots of this strand of the Ross family in America can be traced back to the 1650s, to the time when the region now known as Delaware was merely a Dutch trading settlement, a generation before William Penn started his colony. It can also be traced back to the exemplary ministry of Latchaw's great, great grandfather, the Scottish missionary, the Reverend George Ross, who was married to the great-niece of the Dutch Governor. Ross had been sent by the Church of England to the early settlement of New Castle on the Delaware River, a Swedish/Dutch community that predated both the English settlement and the Quaker colony organized by William Penn. With few churches having been established across the region, Ross offered his pastoral care to both church and unchurched throughout the surrounding countryside. He also invested considerable energy in educating and caring for those who were indentured and enslaved. He served the community at New Castle for nearly half a century.

Another of his sons, Aeneas Ross, followed in his footsteps,



**The Reverend George Ross
by Gustavus Hesselius**

Philadelphia lawyer," Andrew Hamilton, the renowned defender of free speech in the famous Peter Zenger case. John Ross eventually stepped into much of Hamilton's practice in Philadelphia, also serving as Attorney



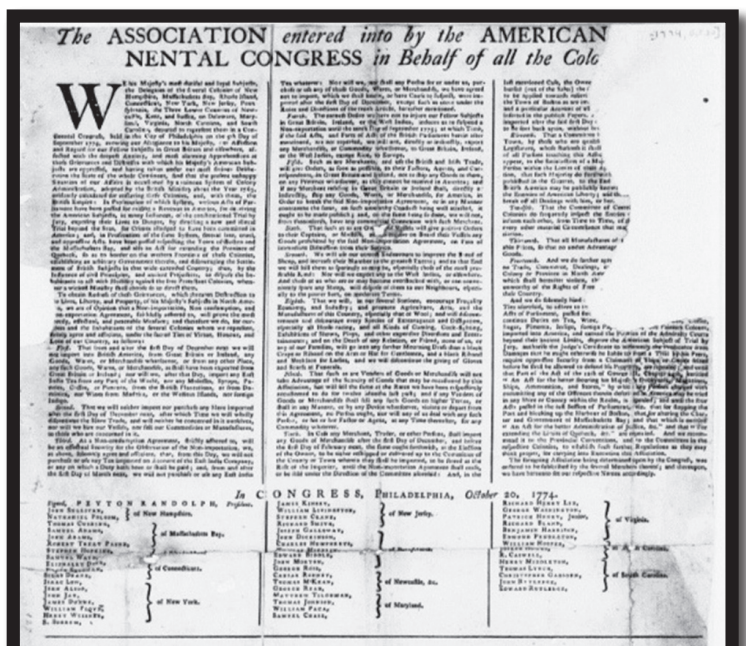
**Copy of a portrait of the
Reverend Aeneas Ross,
father-in-law of the
seamstress Betsy Ross**

population in Philadelphia, launching a meaningful ministry that persisted long after he left. Aeneas eventually returned to lead the family's home congregation at New Castle, Delaware. A firm supporter of the American cause, this congregation was the only Anglican congregation in Delaware remaining open during the American Revolution. Ross had named his only son, John, after his brother. It would be this John Ross, trained as an upholsterer, who would marry Elizabeth Griscomb, alongside whom he worked at the outset of the American Revolution. John Ross, who died in 1776, would be the first of two husbands that Betsy Ross would lose during the war.

Had this been all there was to the story, it would have been striking enough. But the daughters of Reverend Ross were instrumental in greatly expanding this influential circle.

Gertrude Ross, a faithful member of Aeneas' congregation at New Castle, was married to the promi-

nent attorney George Read. Considered one of the fathers of Delaware, Read succeeded his brother-in-law John Ross as Attorney General of the Lower Counties. George and Gertrude were personal friends of John and Mary Dickinson, sharing many of the same sentiments as Dickinson, “the Penman of the Revolution,” working together to ensure the colonial governments remained both principled and stable. Read took a leading role in the revolutionary efforts in Delaware, signing the Declaration of Independence for Delaware. He also presided over the creation of their new Constitution, which gave the state the name of Delaware. During the ratification debates of the US Constitution, Read led the charge for the providing equal representation for small states, and once this was secured, pressed for a quick ratification, leading to Delaware becoming “America’s first state!” George Read was one of only six men to sign both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Famously, he signed the Constitution twice, once on his own behalf, and once on behalf of his friend, John Dickinson, who was ill during the signing.



Printed copy of the 1774 Articles of Association



**Catherine Ross Thompson,
by Benjamin West**

Another of the Ross sisters, Elizabeth Ross, married the prominent attorney, Edward Biddle. Having served as a provincial officer in the French and Indian War, he became a leading backcountry lawyer in Reading. He was known to

be especially sensitive to the multicultural nature of the Pennsylvania interior, earning the trust of the backcountry inhabitants, and representing them in the Pennsylvania Assembly. Having taken a prominent role in the resistance against Parliament, he was named President of the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1774 and signed the Articles of Association for Pennsylvania, tactfully helping to lead the politically divided province toward the support of the measures of the Continental Congress. Had he not been seriously injured in a boating accident in early 1776, which permanently destroyed his health, his name would have likewise been etched in history as a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Biddle utilized what strength he had remaining to press for legislation in Pennsylvania to abolish slavery, a measure that was in process when he died in 1779, becoming our nation's first abolition law in 1780.

Another sister, Mary Ross, was married to Mark Bird, one of the leaders of Pennsylvania's iron industry. Bird had grown up in the Pennsylvania frontier

amidst the diverse population along the Schuylkill River. Descended from early Swedish and Huguenot settlers on his mother's side, his father had been an Irish indentured servant who had worked in the iron trade, and after earning his freedom, purchased his own iron works and became a leader in the industry. With the outbreak of the American Revolution, Mark Bird offered to organize and equip an entire company of soldiers from his employees but was told that his men were more valuable where they were, making cannons and ammunition. Bird poured his entire fortune into the war effort, and when Congress was unable to pay the considerable debt they owed to him, Bird was forced into bankruptcy, making him one of the leading American industrialists left in financial ruin as the result of his support of the American Revolution. Today his iron plantation, Hopewell Furnace near Reading, PA, is preserved as a National Historic Site.

The most overtly military branch of this family came through yet another sister, Catherine Ross, who was married to William Thompson. Having commanded the mounted troops in Pennsylvania



**The Death of General Montgomery at
Quebec by John Trumbull, from the Yale
University Art Gallery**

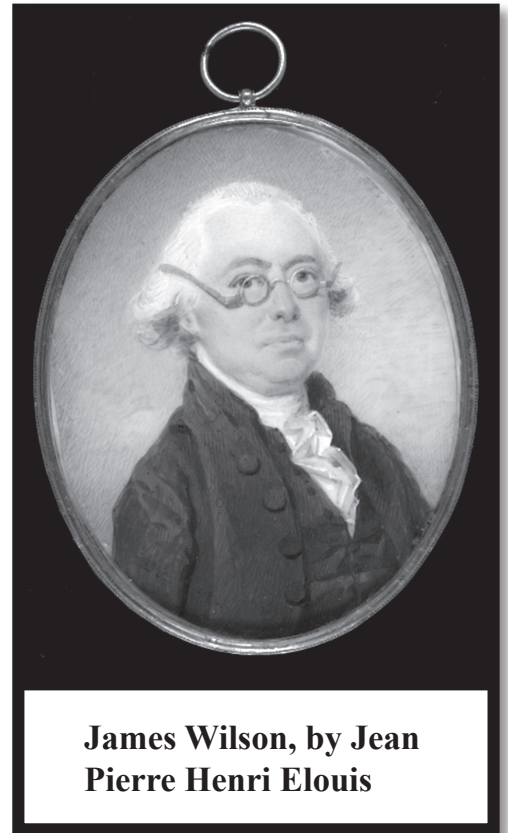
during the French and Indian War, Thompson established himself as a leading merchant across the frontier and represented the westernmost communities in the Pennsylvania Assembly. When the Continental Congress authorized several companies of riflemen from south of the Hudson to join the American resistance in Boston, Thompson was appointed to lead them. Thompson would also be the first American general to be taken as a prisoner of war, and the only Pennsylvania general to die during the American Revolution. Though largely forgotten by later historians, he was sketched while in Boston by artist John Trumbull, who knew him personally and included alongside other “eminent men” being forgotten in the early Republic, featuring him in “The Death of General Montgomery at Quebec.”

Also within this influential circle was James Wilson, who was nominated to his first public office by William Thompson, and who was married to the sister of Mark Bird. Having been mentored in the legal practice by John Dickinson, Wilson became a leading spokesman justifying the principled resistance against Parliament’s legislative overreach, including when necessary the use of force, a substantial contribution in Pennsylvania given its pacifist Quaker heritage. Wilson would cast Pennsylvania’s deciding vote in favor of the Declaration of Independence. In addition to being a leading spokesman for the creation of a national bank, Wilson would be one of the principal authors of the United States Constitution, and instrumental in coining the iconic phrase “we the people” in its preamble.

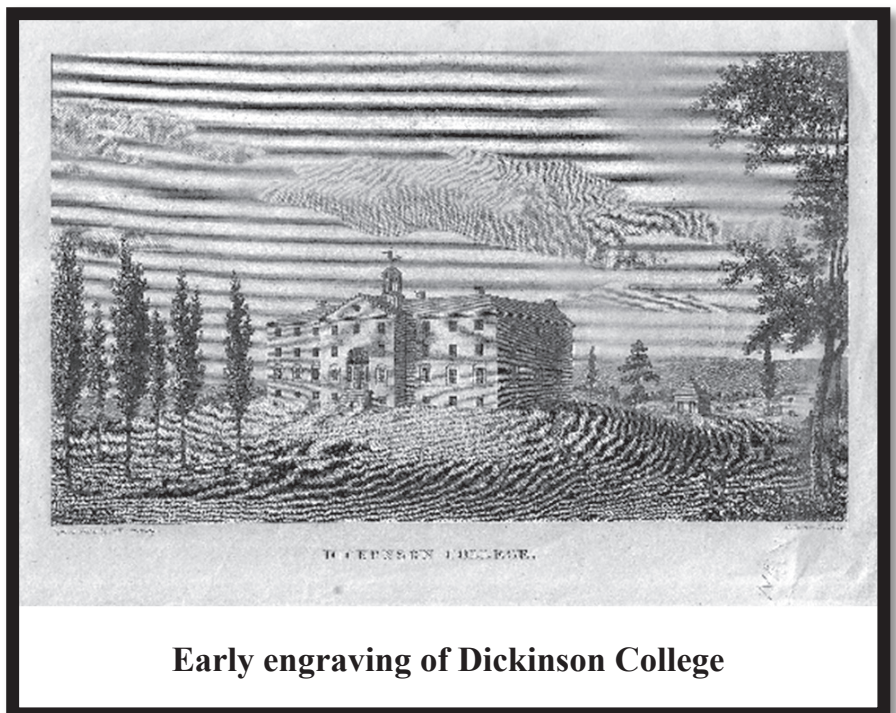
Many of these leaders from this circle were involved in the creation of the Academy in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, eager to

establish a substantial institution of learning accessible to the increasing population within the backcountry. While most of this Ross circle did not survive the war, James Wilson and many of their friends resumed this endeavor as soon as the war was

over. John and Mary Dickinson consented for Dickinson College to be named in their honor, donating the extensive library in their possession for its use as well. Not only did several descendants from this family pursue their education at Dickinson College, but so did a young John Winebrenner and many oth-



James Wilson, by Jean Pierre Henri Elouis



Early engraving of Dickinson College



Latchaw's mother, Ann Ross Latchaw, with two of his children in front of Old Main in Findlay, from the Hancock County Historical Society.

ers among the first generation within the Church of God!

Our roots within the Churches of God do indeed run deeper than we tend to realize, for it is from this noble heritage that Findlay College's first president descended—one integral to the American experiment, and one deeply committed to

learning, to liberty, and to public service! It was this rich legacy that Latchaw sought to draw upon as he led the Churches of God into their visionary endeavors of global outreach, community development, and the training of tomorrow's leaders!

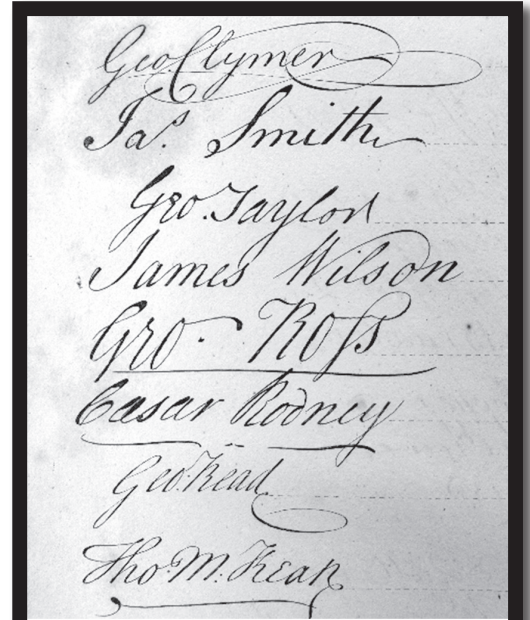
Latchaw's heritage provides us with a timely example of a rooted reality that continues to anchor us, to nourish us, and to provide for us a vital lifeline within the present. My hope is that a more substantial exploration of these roots will lead us to a richer, deeper awareness and appreciation of our own identity, and will lead to an increasingly fervent resolve to pursue our own callings together with conviction and excellence.

As we look back across these centuries to find those

that last, things worthy of our celebration, may we be reminded that our roots run deep—so much deeper than we know! We are certainly not the first to face difficult times or overwhelming challenges. May we be reminded that we in Christ's church

are not alone but participate in a shared faith and a shared journey, in a trajectory that far transcends our own lifetime! And He who called us is faithful and, as He promised, remains with us every step of the way!

So as we look toward tomorrow to face the formidable challenges ahead and to address the questions and concerns tormenting the 21st Century, we may do so boldly, reassured that we do indeed stand upon a sure foundation and that have been provided with the same deep wells to draw from and, like President Latchaw, are endowed with a remarkably rich and rooted reality poised to orient and to sustain us well into the future.



Close-up of several of the signatures included on the Declaration of Independence

201 Years Down, 99 to Go

by Jacob Clagg



By the time this article is published, it will be nearly a full year since the CGGC's Bicentennial Celebration event in Harrisburg, PA in July of 2025. That means the first year in this new century is nearly complete, and there are only 99 more to go until we can celebrate the 300th anniversary of the denomination!

In the lead up to the Bicentennial Celebration, we wrote and published numerous pieces about the history of the CGGC. We interviewed pastors and historians. We dug into the archives to pull out significant bibliographies of people close to the founding. We republished historical materials that were contemporaneous 100 and 200 years ago but which are still relevant. We produced and published a documentary film, which can be watched at film.cggc.org and we even documented the process of creating the film, which was published in this very magazine in the run up to the celebration (see Winter/Spring Issue 2025, V35.1.)

In the two years prior to the Bicentennial, The Global Advocate covered the history of every current region and eldership, along with the history of

the University of Findlay, and Winebrenner Theological Seminary, and Global Reach. Intermixed with these histories were modern stories that helped give each part of our denomination a broad (and admittedly brief) overview of the last 200 years.

In our regional pieces, we started with the newest region, the Southeast Region Conference which encompasses churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, and ended with the Eastern Region (East Penn, Maryland, New York) where John Winebrenner was born, raised, and practiced his ministry.



Officially created as a region in 2022, we told the story of how the Southeast Region, and her churches, came to be a part of the denomination from the moment Pastor Rich Thornton put up a Craigslist ad asking for church planters.

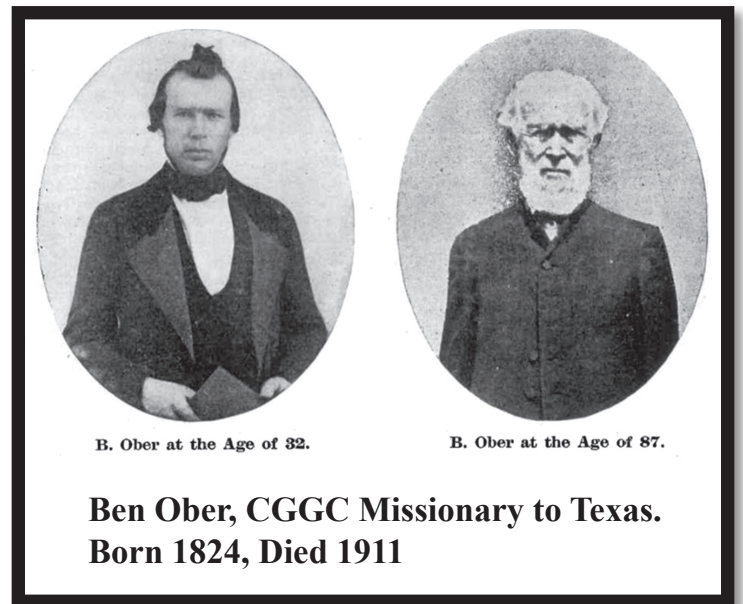
We covered the final westward stretches as people left the dustbowl of the Great Plains to find new life in California, which resulted in our California Eldership in 1947. And we covered the first arrivals to those Great Plains in the issue before, when we detailed stories and the ministry of the Western Region. On back we went from the Midwest Region, through the Great Lakes, Allegheny, and to the Eastern Region where it all started in Harrisburg.

In doing so, it's been fascinating to see how history and geography shape ministry. Who would have guessed that the churches in Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma might be spread out across wide distances? Or that our California churches might be the first to really commit to ministry alongside Latinos? All of those stories, from east to west, can be found in *The Global Advocate*, including interviews which will prove important in the future, like our interview with Dr. Kathryn Fell from the University of Findlay before her retirement announcement, which discusses the importance of faith on campus.

Likewise, through archival research, and interviewing past students, we wrote a brief overview of Winebrenner Theological Seminary's history. While pieces like this always fail to capture the breadth and scope of history properly, they do ground the narrative of the subject in a time and place. WTS's future looks promising and bright, which wasn't always the case historically, and the piece reflects that optimism for the future, even as it traces a line through the past.

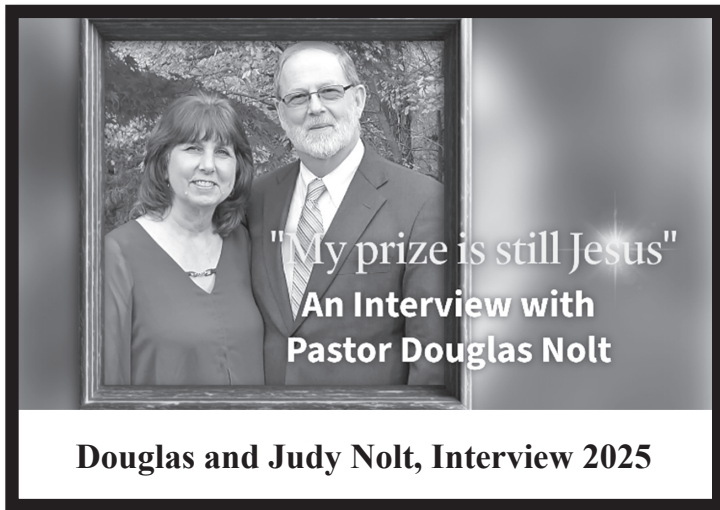
As important as our institutions are, the most important part of our history is always the people. In the past few years, we have covered important people like Churches of God founder John Winebrenner, our first missionaries like Clara Landis and Viola Hershey Cover, and controversial figures like Ben Ober. In addition to the big names from history, we have, and continue to feature the stories of pastors, church leaders, missionaries, and everyday Christians who are making impacts for the Kingdom of God both large and small. Whether they know it or not, they are part of the history of God's Church.

We've not only republished historical pieces, but we've documented new histories through interviews, which has engendered a new desire to continue covering retired pastors and ministry work-



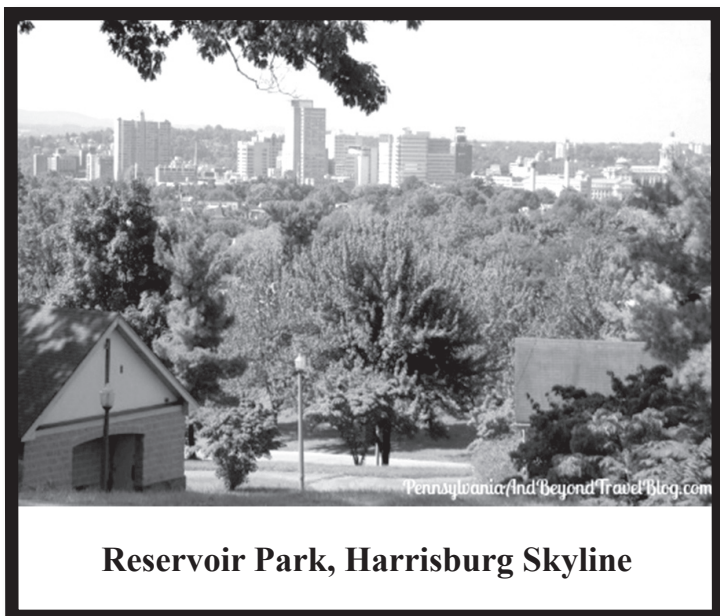
ers before their voices are lost forever. As we've completed these interviews, we've ensured they are placed in the relevant files in the Archives Museum so they can be used for future research.

Perhaps one of the most interesting and timely things we did in the run up to the Bicentennial was publish an issue of the *Advocate* in which we looked



back at the Centennial service in 1925, and all the work that was done for that time. Written by S.G. Yahn, A Century of Sacrificial Service was the centennial sermon delivered at the 100-year celebration event in Harrisburg in 1925, and it was delivered to churches all across the CGGC so pastors far afield could preach the same sermon. In it, Rev. Yahn uses his imagination to recollect the events of 1825, while sitting atop a hill in Reservoir Park just outside of Harrisburg, overlooking the capital city.

Yahn says that, “We are met in this historic city where our work had its beginning a hundred years ago. We are standing between the grave of one century and



the cradle of another. Our eyes fill with the tears of a grateful memory and our hearts thrill with the joys of an eager hope. We have reached the sacred hour when we are about to cross the dividing line between the centuries. The place, the time and the circumstances all combine to call us closer to God and the service of His church, whatever sacrifice such service may involve.”



The good reverend rightly points out the stark difference between 1825 and 1925. We might ask, how much starker is 2025? We have more equipment, more finances, more people, more buildings, and churches; more resources of every kind. And with more comes more responsibility and stewardship. In the first 100 years, the Churches of God had extended from coast to coast and had taken our first steps into foreign fields. Now, 100 years later, we are truly global.

Indeed, one of the key features of our Bicentennial, and a differentiating feature from the Centennial, is that many of our international missionaries and field leaders were present to share their work and be encouraged by all their supporters in the States. Missionaries from Thailand and Hawaii were present, along with field leaders from Brazil, Mexico, South Asia, South Central Asia, and Haiti. Some were only able to join by video, while Travis Helm, Global Reach director, shared about the fields who couldn't be present. Attendees listened intently to the historic work that continues to happen on 4 different continents, which

in total nearly equal the number of churches we have in the states, and laid hands on the leaders in prayer.

Yahn felt then, as we should feel now, that our time has not merely arrived, it has been worked for, sacrificed for, prayed for, and invested in. The sweat, labor, and even the blood of believers from two centuries past aches and echoes toward this moment. Yahn asked his audience then, and we ought to ask ourselves now, “Have we of today the spirit of sacrifice which has distinguished our hundred years of history?... I pass it on to you, to be answered alone with your God in the secret place of prayer.”

The entire Centennial Forward Movement was an attempt to capture the momentum built up in the Churches of God in the first 100 years, and to catapult the denomination forward for the next 100. It’s utterly fascinating to read historical people grappling with their own history. It is easy for modern people to lump all prior history together, but it’s important to remember that people of the past knew their place in time, searched eagerly for meaning and understanding in the legacies that led to themselves, and hoped to shape the future.

The Bicentennial Celebration then attempted to do much the same, stretching back into the past and pressing forward toward the future. In July



Peace Church Sign, and top view of the song service

of 2025, there were numerous events for people to take part in to experience the past and think deeply about the CGGC’s legacy of faith.

We had a tour all around Harrisburg and the surrounding communities to see historic churches and landmarks, led by Ed Rosenberry re-enacting John Winebrenner, in full costume! Likewise, we had a wonderful Hymn Sing at Peace Church, one of Winebrenner’s first churches.

Yet, with all that material, there was still much left on the cutting room floor. Stories left to tell or retell, archive materials that need new attention, pictures

that ought to be seen, and new connections that could be made by matching the historical and the contemporary. The truth is, we could spend the next 200 years talking about the last 200 years, and we wouldn’t exhaust all that could be said.

It’s for that reason that our name and vision for Triennial Conference last year had one foot in each world. “Innovate: New Mea-



1925 General Eldership Picture

sures Now” is a clarion call for action. New Measures is a reference to our past; Winebrenner’s “New Measures” which found him locked out of his church for the disruption they brought to the establishment of his day, were an attempt to reach people for Je-



sus in new ways. As Pastor Ed Rosenberry says in the documentary film, “that’s what’s needed now.”

New Measures is intended then to be an antiquated term, but there are modern analogues. “Fresh Expressions”, “New Works”, “Missional Opportunities”. All of which describe a church trying to find new ways of helping people meet and come to know the same Jesus Christ.



Bicentennial Logo

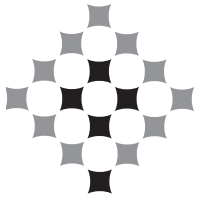
In the CGGC, that innovation is taking on many forms. Winebrenner Theological Seminary (WTS) is on the cutting edge of seminary economics and edu-

cation delivery, going both fully online in their courses, and with a subscription based at \$300 a month. Accessibility is the name of the game. WTS’s bet is that the biggest hurdle to enrollment is accessibility. By reducing tuition and allowing courses to be fully online, the barrier to accessing education is about as low as it can be. Likewise, WTS is partnering all over to offer courses in prisons and countries like Kenya.

A number of bugs that came out of Covid turned out to be features. Innovations like “Drive-in Church” which was initially a stop gap measure for social distancing has become a new style in some churches. Likewise, church based preschool education has gone from another way to do outreach, to a vital resource for communities facing early childhood education shortfalls. We’ve covered house churches, bar churches, and food ministries. Churches that go into prisons, and prisons that birth new churches. Churches that once sat empty for 6 days a week are now home to a menagerie of different ministries, non-profit, and for-profit businesses, helping to fund the church. Churches are innovating with day and time, location, style, leadership structures, and delivery methods.

At both the national and regional level of the CGGC, we’re raising funds for innovation, and we’re investing in church leaders to help them rethink and retrain how they run their ministries. We’re bringing together leaders from across the denomination (and across the world) to learn from each other, establishing best practices, useful strategies, or just encouragement through the tough and blessed work of ministry.

All of this, because the work of the kingdom isn’t done until Christ returns, until every knee bows before Him.



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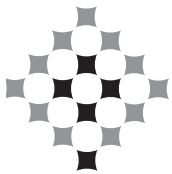
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