

A HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN
OKLAHOMA: THE FORMATIVE
YEARS, 1914-1929

By

LEROY WESLEY HAWKINS

Bachelor of Arts

Panhandle State College

Goodwell, Oklahoma

1964

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
July, 1972

FEB 5 1973

A HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN
OKLAHOMA: THE FORMATIVE
YEARS, 1914-1929

Thesis Approved:

Theodore L. Agnew

Thesis Adviser

Robert R. Madson

D. Durham

Dean of the Graduate College

836868

PREFACE

Principal among the desired sources utilized in this study, particularly on the church histories in Chapter III, are the Oklahoma District Council Minutes. The Oklahoma District's collection, however, was accidentally destroyed by fire in the mid-1960's, with only Minutes for approximately one third of the years under study in this thesis having been located. Other sources, principally church minutes, were never recorded or have long since been misplaced. The author, therefore, relied largely on personal reminiscences, narratives, and a few relevant accounts printed in various Pentecostal publications of the period for tracing the affiliation of the churches with the Oklahoma District Council. Throughout this study the practice of enclosing distinctively denominational phrases in quotation marks has been followed, i.e., "Spirit-Baptized" on page 2, etc.

The author wishes to acknowledge the following persons, without whose assistance this study would have been impossible: Those individuals who responded to his questionnaire or who consented to personal interviews; the librarians of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Southwestern Assemblies of God College, Waxahachie, Texas; Central Bible College, Springfield, Missouri; and the library at the Assemblies of God Headquarters Building, Springfield, Missouri, for the complete liberty afforded the author in arranging for interlibrary loans and utilization of other desired materials; the Reverends Messrs.

J. L. Haddock and Fred Eiting who graciously made available invaluable historical documents from their personal collections; and the Reverend Robert Goggin, Superintendent of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, for his splendid cooperation in every manner. And to Dr. Theodore L. Agnew, my thesis adviser, for his constant encouragement and valuable criticisms while completing this study; my wife Leta, for her love and encouragement; typist Ann Smith, who has gone beyond the call of duty in order that a deadline might be met; and to a host of friends, for their encouragement and interest in the topic of study, I shall ever be grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT: A STUDY OF BEGINNINGS	1
II. THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT: BEGINNINGS IN OKLAHOMA	16
III. THE OKLAHOMA DISTRICT: A FERTILE FIELD	48
IV. THE OKLAHOMA DISTRICT: CONTINUED GROWTH AND MATURITY	80
V. CONCLUSIONS	120
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	123

CHAPTER I

THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT: A STUDY OF BEGINNINGS

At various times in the history of the Christian Church certain great scriptural truths have been given special emphasis -- Justification under Luther, Sanctification under Wesley, etc. At the turn of the twentieth century there appeared a group of devoted followers whose primary motivation was the re-emphasis of what they believed to be such a truth -- a Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The experience, as recorded in Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 12, and Mark 16:17, they considered not only desirable but one which should be repeated in the life of every Christian. They considered it to be a definite function of the Holy Spirit both separate from and in addition to His regenerating work. As outlined in the Book of Acts, this "Pentecostal Experience" involved the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on a believer to the point that he would be "filled" therewith. He would be literally baptized with the Holy Spirit until all his faculties were taken possession of and he spoke in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled, or gave utterance. A principal purpose of such an experience was to be the impartation of supernatural power for Christian service.¹

¹P. C. Nelson, "Answers to Questions Concerning the Baptism in the Spirit," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 1689 (September 21, 1946), p. 8.

The above-mentioned group, who came to be called Pentecostals, believed that their spiritual lineage emanated from the first "Spirit-baptized" Christians of the Apostolic period who established the pattern for the Church of all ages. However, the Pentecostal movement was also a "reactionary movement" whose roots were set in the Holiness-Perfectionist protest to the alleged stiffening institutionalism and secularism increasingly found in the older American churches between 1865 and 1900.² The forces of mass immigration, industrialization, and the transition from rural to urban living produced a period of social upheaval and spiritual confusion, with consequences thus described by A. M. Schlesinger: "Perhaps at no time in its American development has the path of Christianity been so sorely beset with pitfalls and perils as in the last quarter of the nineteenth century."³

To certain conservative elements within the Christian community, these rapid social changes ushered in loose morality and religious apathy which threatened the preservation of a doctrine and a way of life once dominant in older communions. Likewise, the nation's newly acquired wealth and prosperity fostered a seemingly inevitable corollary, the increased opulence and institutionalization of the churches. With this spread what was loosely considered liberalism, and the older Methodist churches de-emphasized the basic tenets of the

²The Pentecostal movement has been referred to by various other names such as "The Apostolic Faith Movement," "The Latter Rain Movement," and "The Tongues Movement." Nils Bloch-Hoell, The Pentecostal Movement; Its Origin, Development, and Distinctive Character (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1964), p. 13.

³A. M. Schlesinger, "A Critical Period in American Religion, 1875-1900," Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, LXIV (1932), p. 523.

evangelical Wesleyan heritage -- revivalism and a "crisis" experience.⁴ Thus revivalism gave way in the more costly and luxurious churches to the customs of the upper middle class.⁵ And the common man found neither social acceptance nor religious satisfaction in the new order. Winthrop S. Hudson says of this development:

In a very real sense the churches had become victims of their own success. They had succeeded in creating a culture that was recognizably Christian, and now -- proud of their achievements and pleased that their mission had been so largely accomplished -- the churches relaxed and made peace with the world. The progression which followed was clear and remorseless -- discipline disappeared, evangelistic fervor faded, faith lost its force, and the churches, living at peace with the world, lost their sense of a distinct and specific vocation in society and devoted their energies to social activities, humanitarian enterprises, and the building of costly edifices.⁶

Moreover, as revivalism waned the older churches moved in the direction of the "social gospel," which tended to emphasize human betterment rather than the salvation of souls. By the 1880's certain segments were vigorously reiterating a criticism of the church dating back to the 1850's:

[That it was] 'almost as common to hear about the regeneration of the race as the salvation of souls,'.....

⁴ Timothy Smith describes the term as "The use of special efforts to secure conversions amidst excited group emotions." Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 46. "Revivalism stressed the fact that salvation depended upon personal decisions. Religion was an inner matter, not an institutional affair. It meant the personal acceptance of Christ as Savior and not simply an intellectual assent to a creedal statement." William Warren Sweet, The American Churches (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), p. 52.

⁵ Sweet, The American Churches, p. 72.

⁶ Winthrop S. Hudson, The Great Tradition of the American Churches (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), pp. 201-02.

[and that] missionary and Bible societies . . . [win] greatest praise for their civilizing rather than their spiritual influence.⁷

The Holiness Movement, in which the Pentecostal Movement had its main roots, was provoked in the 1880's as a reaction to the alleged modernism and liberalism of the more conventional churches. Representing an attempt to reemphasize old doctrines from which society had drifted, the various sects which emerged harbored no designs at creating totally new doctrines or standards. They viewed themselves simply as part of the continuing heritage of the Wesleyan movement which had emerged in England more than a century earlier. Among the doctrines which they were to reemphasize was Wesley's doctrine of sanctification or "Christian perfection."

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, had preached a doctrine of "entire sanctification." He maintained that even after one's conversion there remained within the heart "an inner bent toward evil which was the bitter fruit of Adam's fall," and that it was a real possibility for every Christian, having been justified by faith, to attain a complete eradication of this depravity or inbred sin through an experience subsequent to and distinct from justification or conversion, a "second blessing."⁸

Inevitably, because of the diverse theological backgrounds of those within the Holiness movement, considerable differences developed

⁷Fletcher Harper, editor of the nation's most flourishing young magazine, 1854, quoted in Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform, p. 15; and *ibid.*

⁸Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness -- The Story of the Nazarenes: The Formative Years (Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962), p. 10.

as to the nature of "entire sanctification." The movement came to be divided into some twenty or thirty sects endorsing one of two basic doctrinal positions. The "perfectionist" groups, themselves divided, considered the experience of sanctification as either a complete, instantaneous eradication of sinful desires or an enduring fidelity to God, with both viewpoints maintaining that this "second blessing" would be evidenced, at the most, by lively praying, shouting, or physical demonstration.⁹ On the other hand, there were those groups, categorized by present-day scholars as the left-wing of the Holiness Movement, who maintained that the experience would be confirmed by the gifts of the Spirit, most notably speaking in tongues. The latter was the position endorsed by the majority of those groups destined to be Pentecostals.¹⁰ Finally, in addition to these differing Holiness views, there were those elements of non-Holiness background destined to become Pentecostal who emphasized a "Finished Work" -- the theory that there is no need for a second distinct experience of sanctification, for one is sanctified at the time of conversion. The supporters of this viewpoint eventually formed such Pentecostal groups as the Assemblies of God, International Church of the Four-Square Gospel,

⁹ Among Holiness groups, the term "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" was also in vogue when referring to the experience of sanctification. Those Pentecostals who emphasize sanctification as a "second definite work of grace" trace their heritage to these "perfectionist" groups. One large segment, including the various Churches of God, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, and the Church of God in Christ (the largest Negro Pentecostal Church), is the product of this holiness background with its stress upon the doctrine of Wesleyan perfectionism.

¹⁰ John Thomas Nichol, Pentecostalism (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 6.

and the Open Bible Standard Church.¹¹

The reaction of the Holiness sects to a growing "worldliness" led many to search for a religious experience beyond that of traditional holiness, which would enable them to neutralize and disavow what they saw as the modernistic trends that had crept into the older churches. Furthermore, many -- having professed an experience of sanctification but continuing to observe signs of the "old nature" within themselves -- had become convinced that a definite "evidence" of this experience must exist, an evidence which they had failed to receive. The result was a renewed commitment to prayer, fasting, and heart-searching at various Holiness camp meetings and prayer and Bible conferences in an earnest attempt to deepen their spiritual lives. C. M. Ward, a Pentecostal with a heritage dating back to the movement's infancy, has classically described the consequence of this spiritual introspection:

The Pentecostal Movement was the result of walking closely with the Lord. Men did not seek to establish methods. They did not set out to be 'different' or peculiar. They simply wanted to go God's way and secure God's results. This brought them to the Book of Acts and a revival of apostolic power.¹²

The increased attention to a religious experience that occurred some time after conversion led to the inescapable conclusion that it involved a definite encounter with the Holy Spirit. And pointing to

¹¹A note of caution: The distinctive emphasis of the present Pentecostal Movement is not on sanctification as a separate work of grace. The necessity for sanctification as a definite experience is not held as a doctrine by the entire Pentecostal Movement of today. Even when this doctrine is kept, the speaking with tongues is held to be evidence not of sanctification but the sign of the Spirit Baptism.

¹²C. M. Ward, God Speaks Today (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 39.

an apostate institutionalized church as indisputable proof that their generation was living in the closing days of the Church Age, many evangelical leaders began issuing a call to all true believers to await an outpouring of God's Spirit as promised in Acts 2:17.¹³ From this frenzy of spiritual introspection there emerged a pronounced distinction as to the nature of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit -- one that would hereafter constitute the basic differentiating tenet of belief between these early Holiness groups and the later Pentecostal ones. Heretofore, many Holiness believers had associated the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with sanctification as a second definite work of grace occurring at conversion. However, once that group of Christians, later known as the "Fire-Baptized Holiness Church," had established a marked difference between "holiness" and "power" (Acts 3:12) and perceived the Baptism in the Holy Spirit as an enduement of power subsequent to conversion, a major hurdle had been cleared in the evolution of Pentecostal doctrine.¹⁴ This distinction was clarified further with Dr. R. A. Torrey's popularization of the view that an empowering Baptism of the Holy Spirit would be necessary if they were to be an effective witness to their generation.

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is an operation of the Holy Spirit distinct from and subsequent to His regenerating work . . . an impartation of power, and the one who receives it is fitted for service. [Such an experience was] not merely for the Apostles, nor merely for those of the apostolic age,

¹³"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh. . . ."

¹⁴Carl Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 9.

but for 'all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' . . . It is for every believer in every age of the Church's history.¹⁵

Born of revival, the Holiness movement found its expression in the many "bands, associations, and camp-meetings of a more or less extra-denominational character" which sprang up all over the nation in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.¹⁶ Nearly a century earlier the camp meeting had proven itself a most important and useful institution in the propagation of frontier revivalism, although some disliked the "constant noise and confusion," numerous displays of the "falling exercise," the "jerks," etc. -- all of which was an affront to those acclimated to more restrained modes of worship.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the camp meeting idea continued to grow throughout the nation, primarily as a Methodist technique of evangelization, and visible demonstrations of the Spirit accompanied this growth.¹⁸ Nichol strongly attests to this legacy of traditional camp meeting emphasis on the workings of the Spirit:

. . . Many Christians . . . [were] taught by the Holiness Movement in America . . . to expect manifestations of the Spirit. They . . . stressed that outward evidences would attend the person who was being 'baptised in the Holy Spirit' (i.e., sanctified). . . . To these Holiness groups,

¹⁵ Reuben A. Torrey quoted in Nichol, Pentecostalism, p. 26.

¹⁶ Klaude Kendrick, The Promise Fulfilled (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 32.

¹⁷ Sweet, The American Churches, p. 54.

¹⁸ William Warren Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 149.

the Pentecostals represented everything that the Holiness Movement had projected for itself when it first evolved in the post-Civil War era.¹⁹

From the minute he arrived on the grounds, a sense of urgency gripped the Holiness camper. There was no time lost, for he engaged in a dawn-to-dusk revivalism. The camp-meeting preacher was a fiery speaker, moving his audience into raptures or instilling in them an overpowering sense of guilt and fear. Without a note or manuscript, he was generally expected to quote, expound, and apply the word of God to the hearts and consciences of the people. In contrast, the mere observation of a seminary-trained clergyman delivering a sermon from a prepared text prompted an early nineteenth century preacher to compare the spectacle to "a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew."²⁰ In the religious enthusiasm of these worship services, motoric phenomena such as involuntary screams, convulsions, rolling, and dancing occurred with some degree of regularity, as had been traditional with American revivalism since the Great Awakening. And occasionally the worship of Holiness believers was marked by motoric outbursts of glossolalia.²¹ Indeed, toward the end of the the century, an increasing number of believers encountered spiritual experiences characterized by glossolaliac utterances. While the physical phenomena were common among the Holiness movement, and later among the Pentecostals, the latter practiced and accentuated glosso-

¹⁹ John Thomas Nichol, "Pentecostalism: A Descriptive History of the Origin, Growth, and Message of a Twentieth Century Religious Movement" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston University Graduate School, 1965), p. 125.

²⁰ W. P. Strickland, ed., Autobiography of Peter Cartwright: The Backwoods Preacher, by Peter Cartwright (New York, 1856), p. 80.

²¹ This is the Greek term whose English equivalent is "speaking in tongues."

lalia above all others.²² In summary, the interdenominational Holiness camp meeting possessed characteristics which contributed tremendously to the coming Pentecostal revival.

Thus the dawn of the twentieth century found an irreparable theological and sociological schism within the church in America. Within the conservative-fundamentalist segment these circumstances, working in conjunction with the supposed advent of a revolutionary charismatic experience, foreshadowed the appearance of still another fervent revivalistic movement. The basis of the new Pentecostal revival was an unparalleled emphasis upon the supernatural. The movement derived its name and operational pattern from the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost following the crucifixion of Christ, as recorded in Acts 2:4 and often referred to as the "birthday of the Church."²³ However, as the Pentecostal or "Latter-rain Revival" developed, the word "Pentecost" came to be applied to that personal or collective experience known as the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Undoubtedly many isolated instances of glossolalic utterance existed earlier, but "Pentecost" underwent its twentieth-century rebirth at Bethel Bible College, Topeka, Kansas, on January 1, 1901. A group of approximately forty Latter Rain students, having been given by the Bible school head, a young minister of Methodist background named Charles F. Parham, the directive to study the Book of Acts and to

²² Bloch-Hoell, The Pentecostal Movement; Its Origin, Development, and Distinctive Character, p. 16.

²³ Donald Gee, "'Pentecost' A Word With Many Meanings," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2654 (March 21, 1965), p. 6.

conclude whether it revealed any initial evidence of Holy Spirit baptism, began contending in watch night services at the close of the year 1900 for the "rain" prophesied in Joel 2:23, 28-32. They expected that it would be accompanied by a tongues evidence, a deduction that was "most momentous; . . . it was this decision which has made the Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century."²⁴

Tarrying before the Lord on the first day of January, 1901, the small group of students under Parham's leadership continued to beseech of their Baptizer a spiritual experience aptly describable as "the door that is no door." Their study had emphasized the biblical admonition, "Knock and the door will be opened unto you." But this particular door responds, not to a merely gingerly knock, but to one of total commitment, having been opened neither by weight nor strength. Paradoxically, the door's existence from the very beginning had been contingent upon a falteringly hesitant, a self-dependent effort. Only to the unreservedly committed being will the door open -- the door that is no door. Miss Agnes N. Ozman, one of the Bible students, as the eleven o'clock hour approached that evening, became the first known person in modern times to speak in tongues after having sought a baptism in the Holy Spirit. In relating the circumstances surrounding this charismatic experience, she later said:

We were urged to seek for and to receive the promised baptism in the Holy Spirit. Our hearts became very hungry for his enduement. We prayed earnestly and also fasted, as the Lord laid it upon us. During the last days of 1900 we had a special season of waiting before God, and He gave us blessed times of refreshing. Indeed, about three weeks

²⁴ J. Roswell Flower, "Birth of the Pentecostal Movement," *ibid.*, No. 1907 (November 26, 1950), p. 3.

before this, while three of us girls were in prayer, I spoke three words in another tongue. . . . Not feeling satisfied with the above experience . . . , I decided, January 1, 1901, to obey the Word and have hands laid upon me and prayer offered that I might receive the baptism in the Spirit. As this was done, I began to speak in an unknown tongue. Afterwards I saw my experience was somewhat similar to that in Ephesus, Acts 19:6.²⁵

Again, on January 3, 1901, an additional thirteen individuals experienced glossolalic utterance, after exhortation from Miss Ozman "not to seek for tongues but for the baptism in the Holy Spirit."²⁶ As soon as the majority of those at the school in Topeka had received their baptisms, including the Reverend Mr. Parham, the news was heralded in every direction -- God was now baptizing believers in the Holy Spirit as evidenced by the outward manifestation of glossolalia! Such was the unpretentious rebirth of the Pentecostal movement in the twentieth century.

Within the next five years the Latter Rain fell in many parts of the Middle West. In April, 1906, perhaps the most phenomenal experience was recorded, the result of the arrival in Los Angeles, after invitation, of the Reverend W. S. Seymour, a humble Negro Holiness minister from Houston, Texas. Congregating in the home of some colored saints on Bonnie Brae Street on April 9, 1906, a small group of blacks and whites commenced to wait upon the Lord in an atmosphere conditioned by two years of preparatory prayer. Suddenly several in the group receiving a profound Pentecostal visitation, spoke in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave the utterance. Soon the rapid growth in number

²⁵ Agnes Ozman, "The First One to Speak in Tongues," The Latter Rain Evangel, No. 4 (January, 1909), p. 2.

²⁶ Ibid.

of those attending the Bonnie Brae Street cottage meetings necessitated a move to an old barnlike structure at 312 Azusa Street being used to store building supplies. In a space sufficiently cleared to seat approximately thirty people on nail kegs covered with planks, a meeting began which "lasted for three years, going on day and night without a break."²⁷

"PENTECOST HAS COME. Los Angeles being visited by a revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as recorded in the Book of Acts."²⁸ This message, appearing in headline form in the September, 1906, issue of The Apostolic Faith, drew people from all parts of the world to Los Angeles to observe and learn more of the happenings at the now famous Azusa Street Mission -- happenings fittingly described as "simplicity of organization, of consecration, and of faith. . . ."²⁹ Representing many religious bodies, the congregation seemingly came with only one purpose in mind, a personal confrontation with God as experienced in salvation, sanctification, Holy Spirit baptism, or healing. A participant has described the spiritual climate of the mission as being saturated with audible prayers and worship, the altar area literally enclosed by hungry, seeking souls -- some kneeling, others prostrate under God's power, many speaking in glossolalic utterances -- all

²⁷"How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles: An Eyewitness Account of the Momentous Events of the Year of 1906," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2187 (April 8, 1956), p. 5.

²⁸Robert C. Cunningham, "The Pentecostal Visitation of 1906, Part I," *ibid.*, No. 2696 (January 9, 1966), p. 10.

²⁹Robert C. Cunningham, "The Pentecostal Visitation of 1906, Part II," *ibid.*, No. 2697 (January 16, 1966), p. 9.

participating in a sanctified near bedlam.³⁰ The Reverend Mr. Seymour, the overseer of the mission in the beginning, "generally sat behind two empty shoe boxes, one on top of the other, . . . [and] usually kept his head inside the top one during the meeting, in prayer."³¹ Determined that there would be no ecclesiastical forms to shackle the operation of the Spirit, the entire worship service -- singing, praise, testimony, preaching, etc. -- was impromptu and spontaneous. "In that old building with its low rafters and bare floors," wrote Frank Bartleman, "God took strong men and women to pieces, and put them together again, for His glory. It was a tremendous overhauling process."³²

Proclaiming the work in Los Angeles as having been "'born in a manger and resurrected in a barn,'" those who underwent supernatural encounters with the Holy Spirit at Azusa soon branched out over the United States and Canada and across seas to every continent, in an evangelistic effort to reap a mighty harvest of souls.³³ Thus world evangelism was the mission of the Pentecostal movement from the very beginning, consistent with Apostolic Christianity. Within an amazingly brief period of time the phenomena of glossolalia began appearing in the same fashion throughout North and South America, in Europe, and in other parts of the world. "The Day of Pentecost was not an end but

³⁰ Personal interview with E. S. Williams, June 16, 1966.

³¹ Stanley Howard Frodsham, With Signs Following: The Story of the Pentecostal Revival in the Twentieth Century (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1946), p. 36.

³² Frank Bartleman quoted in Frodsham, *ibid.*

³³ Robert C. Cunningham, "The Pentecostal Visitation of Azusa Street," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 1786 (July 31, 1948), p. 7.

a beginning," the beginning of revival that "turned the world upside down."³⁴

Believing beginnings to be important in the establishment of norms, the author has attempted in this introductory chapter to trace only the beginning of the twentieth-century Pentecostal movement, intending the efficacy of the Pentecostal message to remain the sole judgment of the reader. The Latter Rain movement was the beginning not only of eschatological revival, but of new denominations as Spirit-filled believers were expelled from their former denominations and bound themselves together to accomplish what had been impossible individually.

Among the denominations that thus appeared was the Assemblies of God, whose founders met in Hot Springs, Arkansas, April 2 to 12, 1914, to worship, fellowship, and discuss common Pentecostal concerns. At this first General Council they formulated the basis for union of a heterogeneous cooperative fellowship which rapidly became a national organization and within ten years of its formation the largest Pentecostal denomination. Therefore, the author's intent is to address the succeeding chapters to the beginnings of the local and personal "Pentecosts" that occurred in the state of Oklahoma under the ministry of this particular branch of the Pentecostal movement, the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

³⁴Gee, "'Pentecost' A Word With Many Meanings," p. 6.

CHAPTER II

THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT:

BEGINNINGS IN OKLAHOMA

Following the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" at Bethel Bible School, Topeka, Kansas, 1901, the "Pentecostal message," in the next thirteen years, was spread across the state of Oklahoma and other southwestern and southern states through the labors and ardor of various self-appointed individuals and through such means as revivals, religious publications, Bible schools, camp meetings, and personal witnessing endeavors. Some thirteen thousand people had embraced the new faith in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas by 1906.¹ And in the years from 1907 to 1914 a spirit of independence developed in Pentecostal circles. "Individual faith for individual achievement seemed to be the keynote for much of the early ministry."² Likewise, many Pentecostal believers considered it a sign of spirituality to belong to no organized ecclesiastical body. The declaration that "The Holy Spirit has carried on this work . . . and 'is able to continue to carry it on and control it in the future'" was common.³ Consequently

¹Robert C. Cunningham, "The Pentecostal Visitation at Azusa Street," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 1786 (July 31, 1948), p. 3.

²J. Roswell Flower, "Why a General Council?" *ibid.*, No. 2768 (May 28, 1967), p. 8.

³E. N. Bell, "Bible Order Versus Fanaticism," Word and Witness, X, No. 3 (March 20, 1914), p. 2.

the lack of a central organization ultimately produced a looseness of conduct and doctrine within the movement which led many Pentecostals to believe that some means of closer fellowship and cooperative effort among the ministers and churches of the movement was a necessity.

The Reverend Charles F. Parham's evangelistic efforts in the two years following Topeka were filled with controversy, persecution, failure, and inconsiderable progress. However, upon invitation, Parham began a revival at Galena, Kansas, in October, 1903, which continued until January, 1904, and proved to be a turning point in his ministry. Many were converted and healed in this revival, with approximately five hundred being "sanctified" and two hundred and fifty "undergoing Pentecostal baptisms."⁴ Among those converted and receiving a glossolalic experience was H. A. Goss, a founding father of the Assemblies of God. Following the Galena crusade the work moved to Joplin, Missouri, where in the fall of 1904 another successful campaign was conducted. "Many persons in an area from Carthage, Missouri, to Miami, Oklahoma, accepted the 'full gospel,' and numerous conversions and healings were reported in connection with the services."⁵ These meetings held at Galena and Joplin in 1903 to 1904 had a definite impact upon the future Pentecostal penetration of the tri-state region and surrounding areas.

Tahlequah, in Indian Territory, felt the impact of Parham's Galena, Kansas crusade around 1905. At that time H. A. Goss and wife, Ethel, in one of their earliest evangelistic efforts, conducted a tent revival there for S. D. Kinne. Tahlequah, consequently, in all proba-

⁴Klaude Kendrick, The Promise Fulfilled (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 60.

⁵Ibid.

bility is the oldest Pentecostal center in Oklahoma. It later established a church and was one of the first in the state to affiliate with the Assemblies of God. W. T. Gaston, who became the first Chairman of the Oklahoma District, was the pastor of this assembly in late 1910 or early 1911.⁶

Another early "convert to Pentecost" who lived in the Galena, Kansas, area was Mrs. C. O. Fry. Her family moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, sometime after Parham's meetings. Mrs. Fry sold a diamond ring for \$1,500, and in August, 1908, assisted financially in securing Charles F. Parham and a tent for revival services.⁷ The tent was pitched at Third and Cincinnati Streets, the present location of Hotel Tulsa. Members of the Parham party, Bob and Bertha Davis, invited a cousin, Mrs. Emma J. Hughes, and as a result thirty or more individuals, representing several branches of the family, came to view the "new" religion. Approximately a score of them were converted.⁸ One hundred persons embraced the new faith by the end of the revival.⁹ Among these were Fannie Hughes Pope and cousin, Willa Lowther; Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Walker; Mrs. Martha Baxter and younger sister; Kimbal Gray; and Oscar Wolfe.¹⁰ Other converts of the revival were Frank Carter, a Mrs.

⁶ Carl Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 166.

⁷ Mrs. R. E. Nance, Jr., "Saga of Sixty Years' Growth," in Sixtieth Anniversary Celebration -- Central Assembly of God Church (No Publisher, 1967), p. 4.

⁸ Mr. & Mrs. Willard H. Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁹ Nance, "Saga of Sixty Years' Growth," p. 4.

¹⁰ Pope to the author, July 2, 1970; and personal interview with Joe Stumbaugh, August 16, 1967.

Trotter, Mattie Burkett, Mr. and Mrs. John Reddout, and Mrs. Sam Dague.¹¹ Kimbal Gray and a young man named Kelly were "filled with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit."¹² Also resulting from the meeting was Mrs. J. C. Ament's testimony of a phenomenal encounter with the "full gospel" message:

. . . I had never had any deeper experience than conversion, but . . . while attending some special meetings held in this place I received light on the full Gospel.

I had been an invalid for over three years and could find no relief through the best physicians. I had a complication of diseases, gastric ulceration of the stomach and other internal trouble; also spinal and head trouble. . . . At the same time I had atrophy of the optic nerve and was almost blind. . . .

During these meetings I learned that our blessed Savior had made provision in His precious atonement to heal our bodies as well as to save us from sin. Prayer was offered for me with the laying on of hands, and my body was instantly healed. I have been perfectly well ever since. Later on two sisters prayed for my eyes and anointed them that they might be healed. My sight was perfectly restored.¹³

Many of the above formed the nucleus of the Oklahoma District's oldest affiliated assembly. It has had an unbroken continuous existence and was the first Pentecostal group in the state to erect a permanent facility for worship, Fifth and Peoria Assembly of God, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

A year later, September, 1909, Lillian Thistlethwaite, a sister-in-law of Charles F. Parham, came to Tulsa for a revival. The results of the meeting were possibly a disappointment to many, for the only

¹¹Personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Riddle, August 10, 1967.

¹²Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

¹³Mrs. J. C. Ament, "Atrophied Optic Nerve, Spinal Trouble, and Gastritis Healed," The Latter Rain Evangel, No. 5 (February, 1909), p. 19.

convert was a young man named Willard H. Pope. However, the revival's sole convert later became a charter member of the Assemblies of God, the second Chairman of the Oklahoma District, and a pioneer of several council churches in Oklahoma and other states. Recalling his water baptismal experience, Pope wrote years later:

On July 4, 1910, I was immersed in the waters of Bird Creek somewhere north of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Reverend John Hockersmith, a convert of Parham, conducted the baptismal service. The entire church went for this outing -- dinner on the ground, a baptism, a sermon, etc.¹⁴

Beginning in 1911 Willard H. Pope, an indirect convert of the Galena crusade, and evangelistic team conducted numerous meetings for several years throughout central and northeastern Oklahoma at such locations as Chelsea, Catale, Claremore, Wellston, Tahlequah, Shawnee, Pawhuska, Broken Arrow, and the home base, Fifth and Peoria in Tulsa. Pope and a group of converts from Tulsa laid plans for the evangelistic endeavor at Catale in the summer of 1911. The trip to this small community some ten miles from Chelsea was a memorable one.

A portion of the group, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Reeder, Rose Greiser, Mrs. J. C. Ament, and Willard Pope, took the Reeder's wagon to Catale. Sisters Sam Dague and Daisy Reddout, along with Fannie Hughes, made the trip by train.

Since the group in the wagon did not arrive at their destination before nightfall, and whereas, the party was confronted with a rapidly developing storm, a decision was made to take refuge in a church building that could be seen in the distance. But suddenly Brother Jim Reeder, having a 'spiritual premonition,' said, 'Pull in here.' It was a lane leading to a farm house; the farm's owner put up the party for the night in a newly completed stock shed.

¹⁴Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

The group awoke the next morning to discover that Brother Reeder's premonition had spared them from the consequences of a tornado that had demolished the church in which they had originally planned to stay.¹⁵

The team witnessed several additional miraculous undertakings in their behalf while at Catale. Their faith in evangelism was strengthened, and they followed up with another endeavor at Chelsea about two weeks later.

Lincoln county, centrally located within the state, was a major center of Pentecostal activity in the years from 1909 to 1913 and another result of the Galena, Kansas meeting in 1903. Davenport, Lincoln county, was "introduced to Pentecost" in 1909.

A Mr. Reeves, having attended a revival at Siloam Springs, Arkansas, conducted by Alonzo Horn of Galena, later moved to Davenport to operate a farm rented from F. W. Pryor. A Mrs. Minson, Nin R. Adams, Pryor, and others in the community had been searching the scriptures for spiritual assistance. Reeves' account of the Pentecostal meeting in Arkansas precipitated the writing of a letter requesting that the Reverend Mr. Horn come and conduct a campaign in the community. The services were held in a schoolhouse four and a half miles southeast of Davenport. F. W. Pryor's three daughters, Mamie, Ollie, and Mattie, along with other young people of the community, assisted with the singing, using an organ loaned by Ollie Pryor. The campaign, lasting three weeks, produced numerous converts, among which were F. W. Pryor and Mrs. Minson. Although the latter had never heard a glossolalic utterance, she received "a Pentecostal infilling charac-

¹⁵ Ibid.

terized by tongues" quite early in the revival. And her experience is thought by many Pentecostal pioneers of the area to have been the first in Lincoln County. A second meeting was conducted at an adjoining school. It continued for six additional weeks, with many more accepting salvation and being filled with the "Spirit Baptism." The above meetings produced the nucleus of Pentecostal believers from which the Assembly of God in Davenport eventually organized.¹⁶ Other early pioneers of Pentecostal evangelization in the Davenport-Welty area were the Reverend and Mrs. Andy Colbert and the J. A. Corbell team.¹⁷ In 1912, the latter held a fifteen-day meeting in a brick building on the main street of Davenport. Permission to use the building rent free was given by a banker of the town. During one of the services, a man fell to the floor as dead; however, after prayer was offered for his healing, he immediately revived and was a great witness in the town.¹⁸

The "Pentecostal Message" continuing to be disseminated throughout Lincoln county; numerous communities in the Chandler, Sparks, Carney, Stroud, and surrounding areas experienced initial Pentecostal contacts within four years of the above-mentioned meetings near Davenport. As early as 1912 Alonzo Horn and Al M. Humbard conducted a revival at Pleasant Grove Schoolhouse approximately seven miles from Sparks, Oklahoma. Aggie James was converted in this meeting. Although only a layman, James began preaching in 1914 -- four years before his

¹⁶Opal Selph to the author, September 28, 1967.

¹⁷Personal interview with Roy Steger, June 3, 1966.

¹⁸Word and Witness, VIII, No. 8 (October 20, 1912), p. 4.

ordination as an Assemblies of God minister. His ministry has been at Sparks, Wellston, Fallis, Hazel, Konawa, and nearby towns, serving as pastor of a number of churches and conducting many revivals throughout central Oklahoma. While never widespread, this Pentecostal pioneer's tenure of fruitful labor closely coincides with that of the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma.¹⁹ J. A. Corbell and band, in October, 1912, held a successful meeting at Chandler, Oklahoma, where eleven were "filled with the Holy Spirit" on the last night of services.²⁰ Likewise, F. C. Marsh, in March, 1913, reported "four saved and two baptized with the Spirit," while in September of that year Nin R. Adams closed a revival in which fifty were converted and approximately thirty experienced glossolalia.²¹ A Mr. A. Chase was one of the earliest "pioneers of Pentecost" at Garney, northwest of Chandler. His ministry in this community around 1912 is possibly responsible for the eventual founding of an assembly there. And, finally, at Stone Schoolhouse near Stroud, F. C. Marsh conducted a revival in March, 1913, from which four accepted salvation and two received "Pentecostal baptisms."²²

Within four years of the meetings near Davenport, the small community of Wellston in Lincoln county also heard the "Pentecostal message" for the first time. W. T. Gaston "preached the Acts' experience" there in 1913. Later that year Alonzo Horn conducted a series

¹⁹Selph to the author, September 28, 1967; and personal interview with Bert Webb, June 10, 1966.

²⁰Word and Witness, VIII, No. 10 (December 20, 1912), p. 3.

²¹Ibid., IX, No. 3 (March 20, 1913), p. 3, and No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 3.

²²Selph to the author, October 23, 1967; and Word and Witness, IX, No. 3 (March 20, 1913), p. 3.

of meetings, some of which were housed in an old store building in Wellston.²³ Many of the more prominent citizens of the town became quite irate that it was rented to such a "fanatical" group.

But folks began coming. Most who came, however, expected to 'see a show,' not to attend a worship service. A common inquiry among many in the town was, 'Well, are you going to the show tonight -- down where they shout, sing, and dance in the Spirit?'. Some found the service amusing; others attempted to intimidate the worshippers, saying, 'Lets rotten egg them!' In fact, some eggs were thrown. Nonetheless, God began to move, and folks were saved and healed.²⁴

The Reverend Mr. Horn's meetings were of such a consequence that they culminated in services attended by some five hundred on a nearby river bank -- the area's first Pentecostal baptism.²⁵ Another early "propagator of Pentecost" in the Wellston area was Nin R. Adams.²⁶ However, the conversion of a Civil War veteran, "Old Man Rhodes," contributed more toward the acceptance of Pentecost there than all the combined efforts of ministers. Rhodes, a habitual drinker and described as an especially wicked man when intoxicated, wandered into one of the Pentecostal services to listen to the exuberant singing. His subsequent conversion created an indelible impression upon the community.

After giving his heart to the Lord, Rhodes got up from the altar, removed a pint of whiskey stashed inside his coat pocket, walked from the building, and emptied the bottle's contents onto the street. He went home, informed

²³ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966; and Selph to the author, September 5, 1967.

²⁴ Personal interview with C. O. Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

²⁵ Selph to the author, September 5, 1967.

²⁶ Ibid., September 20, 1967.

his wife of his conversion, and stayed up all night reading the Bible.²⁷

Many wagered that Old Man Rhodes' "new life" would be only temporary, but he was never known to stray from the narrow way.

The combined ministries of the above-mentioned individuals produced the nucleus of believers which shortly thereafter chartered the Wellston assembly. This relatively small church was one of the oldest affiliated and most active assemblies in the Oklahoma District. It spiritually sired a remarkable succession of full-time Pentecostal laborers. Paul Ralston, a District Chairman of Oklahoma; Bert Webb, the first District President of Christ's Ambassadors, the official youth organization of the Assemblies of God, and later Assistant General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God; Silva Shelton, Nora Price, E. F. Eidson, Oscar Haymaker, Alvin March -- all were from Wellston.²⁸ Others going out to do significant work were Otis R. Keener, Sr. and sons, Otis Jr. and Harold; W. Hobson Kennemer, Emmitt Knouse, Travis Bradshaw, and Otis Higgins.²⁹

A follower of the Reverend Charles F. Parham "preached Pentecost" in the Oklahoma-Cleveland county area as early as 1905. Will Pennock was among the first company of workers who traveled to Texas in July of that year to spread the full gospel message throughout the Houston area where Parham had, in 1904, come with the message and been warmly

²⁷ Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

²⁸ Selph to the author, September 20, 1967.

²⁹ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966; and Selph to the author, September 20, 1967.

received.³⁰ Arthur B. Cox, " . . . a wild young man who 'went out west' (Oklahoma City) to see the world," was converted in 1906 while observing a Pentecostal service conducted on one of the streets of the city; a subsequent "Pentecostal infilling of the Spirit" was experienced by him a few days later. Thus, the ministry of another eventual attendant of the Hot Springs Convention of 1914 was born.³¹ And an annual Pentecostal Campmeeting was being held in Oklahoma City by 1908.³² A convert of Pentecost in the Oklahoma City area, a distant cousin of the family of Fannie Hughes Pope, came to visit in Tulsa in 1909 and testified of the growth of the work in her city.³³ Three Pentecostal Missions were in existence there by 1912 when the following report was made:

. . . The power of God is falling. Praise His name!
 . . . In one mission recently, fifteen were baptized in one week. On Monday night, of last week, . . . the Lord gave us a literal shower of the latter rain. Five people received the baptism, several others were prostrated under the power for hours, and the glory of God filled the hall.³⁴

Evidence of the strong Pentecostal movement in Oklahoma before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Azusa Street in 1906 continued to manifest itself in numerous additional localities throughout the

³⁰ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, pp. 30-31, passim.

³¹ Guy Davidson, "'Retired' Pioneer A. B. Cox Still Ministers," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2132 (March 20, 1955), p. 10.

³² "Pentecostal Camp Meeting," Word and Witness, X, No. 7 (July 20, 1914), p. 2.

³³ Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

³⁴ Maude M. Delaney, "Witnessing for Jesus in the Southland," The Latter Rain Evangel, No. 43 (April, 1912), pp. 7-8.

state.³⁵ The Pentecostal flame had spread to Beulah, Oklahoma (now Carter, Beckham county) by 1907 where it encountered strong opposition. However, a Holiness evangelist known as "Uncle Tom" found that "'before he could tell the people that they couldn't have Pentecost, they got Pentecost!'"³⁶ Nor had the flame been extinguished in 1912 when J. E. Osborne held a meeting at Carter in which individuals were "saved and sanctified and some [were] seeking Pentecost."³⁷

A four-county tract of south-central Oklahoma consisting of Jefferson, Stephens, Grady, and Garvin counties experienced Pentecostal contacts in the years 1908 to 1911. A. G. Jeffrey held a tent revival in Ryan, Jefferson county, in 1908. E. L. Newby and wife attended this meeting, along with her parents, the Grubbs. Throughout the meeting Jeffrey's voice rang out a message echoing the words of Jesus, "'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter.'"³⁸ The following year, 1909, Archie and Pearl Adams, upon the request of the Newbys, also conducted a meeting in the county at Waurika. The campaign progressed well and an intense hunger for the "Pentecostal baptism" developed among those attending. E. L. Newby reports,

There was no loud praying in the services, and the evangelists were not demonstrative people, but God's power was present in a definite way.

³⁵"The Present Position of Pentecost," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 601 (June 13, 1925), p. 7.

³⁶Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 67.

³⁷"Revival Fires From Heaven Still Burning," Word and Witness, VIII, No. 8 (October 20, 1912), p. 4.

³⁸E. L. Newby, "I Remember," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2609 (May 10, 1964), p. 15.

Then, in one of the morning services, the evangelist spoke a few words in tongues. It was the first time I had ever heard anyone speak in tongues, and since my own heart was prepared and hungry, the Spirit of God came upon me also and I began to speak in tongues.³⁹

A brother-in-law, J. J. Grubbs, and Newby were the only individuals to "receive the Baptism" in that meeting. Both men were also called to preach the gospel. Later, the entire Newby and Grubbs families received the "Acts experience."⁴⁰

M. Guy Dunlap also "pioneered Pentecost" in a part of the four-county tract of south-central Oklahoma experiencing Pentecostal contacts from 1908 to 1911. His field of labor was the Rush Springs, Lindsay, and Marlow areas of Grady, Garvin, and Stephens counties, respectively.⁴¹ Dunlap reported in the Word and Witness that

three years ago [1911] near Rush Springs, Oklahoma, . . . one of my little boys was bitten by a large moccasin snake, well known to be very poisonous. He was prayed for and the poison rebuked in Jesus' name. No medicine was used. It did not swell at all and all these three years since no sign of it has appeared.⁴²

Willie Welchel, Marlin McClellan, and Mabrey Wyatt were also early propagators of the message in this community. Among the Pentecostal believers in the area around 1913 were the members of the Guinn family.⁴³

³⁹E. L. Newby, "The River Still Flows," *ibid.*, No. 2752 (February 5, 1967), p. 15.

⁴⁰Newby, "I Remember," p. 15.

⁴¹Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966; and "Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 4.

⁴²"Snake Bite Healed," *ibid.*, X, No. 1 (January 20, 1914), p. 3.

⁴³Personal interview with Mrs. Marion Mason, August 3, 1968; and "A Child's Testimony," The Weekly Evangel, No. 89 (May 8, 1915), p. 4.

The first Pentecostal meeting at Pea Ridge, approximately eleven miles east of Rush Springs in Garvin county, was conducted in 1914 in a schoolhouse by Will T. McLaughlin who also held some of the earliest meetings at Alma and Marlow, Oklahoma.⁴⁴ Pioneer McLaughlin offered this testimony of his own personal charismatic experience:

The Lord wonderfully saved me one and one half years ago [1911] Then I heard, later on, the Baptism preached. I saw they had something from God I did not have I went down before God for it. He filled me, glory to God, and He sure did talk in tongues through me. . . . I went to Dallas and saw for myself, in three services, the wonderful workings of God. I do praise God for it.⁴⁵

McLaughlin's efforts at Pea Ridge were well rewarded when several members of the Wolford family received the Baptism, among which were Charles M. Wolford; a sister, Mrs. Marion F. Mason; and her husband. Mason, a broom corn farmer of the community, likewise, became a "pioneer of Pentecost" in western Oklahoma with a ministry spanning the years from 1917 through the early 1930's. One of his first converts and recipients of the "Spirit's indwelling" was Roy L. Steger who, in turn, became another Pentecostal trailblazer throughout that part of the state.⁴⁶ Through the combined efforts of such individuals as those mentioned above, Pentecostal saints numbered from fifty to sixty in the area east of Rush Springs in 1915.⁴⁷

⁴⁴The Christian Evangel, No. 65 (October 31, 1914), p. 4.

⁴⁵"More Revival Fires," Word and Witness, IX, No. 2 (February 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁴⁶Personal interview with Mason, August 3, 1968. During this formative period, any area west of Oklahoma City was considered to be "western" Oklahoma.

⁴⁷M. G. Dunlap, "A Testimony," The Weekly Evangel, No. 94 (June 12, 1915), p. 4.

Evidence of the strong Pentecostal movement in Oklahoma continuing, an ordained minister in the Holiness movement, D. W. Savage, receiving word of a Pentecostal meeting where believers were praying for the sick, traveled by train from Wise county, Texas, to Cordell, Oklahoma, Washita county, in a very weakened condition and hemorrhaging badly. Earlier, a country doctor, operating on him for what appeared to be appendicitis but discovering a very large cancer, had pronounced that he had only three months to live. However, ten days after boarding the train for Cordell, Reverend Savage came "walking up the road with his suitcase. He had been healed at the camp meeting, returned on the train, and walked the four miles from the depot! There was not a trace of weakness or disease."⁴⁸ A short time thereafter he underwent a "Pentecostal baptism" and returned to Oklahoma to "preach Pentecost" for nineteen years and pioneer many new churches in old Indian Territory.⁴⁹ In addition, in the summer of 1914, two years after the Reverend Mr. Savage's declared healing, a daughter-in-law, Mrs. H. M. Savage, was also miraculously healed of tuberculosis in a camp meeting conducted by the Reverend John H. James at Waurika, Oklahoma, and was "filled with the Holy Spirit."⁵⁰ These circumstances of healing constituted the beginnings of this Pentecostal family's ministry in Oklahoma -- a ministry that today spans four generations and is one example of the manner in which "Pentecost" grew phenomenally in the

⁴⁸H. M. Savage, "Four Generations of Preachers," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2716 (May 29, 1966), p. 7.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Paul W. Savage to the author, July 10, 1966; "Calendar of Camp Meetings," Word and Witness, X, No. 5 (May 20, 1914), p. 4; and The Christian Evangel, No. 65 (October 31, 1914), p. 4.

state.

Early reports from Oklahomans attending Pentecostal gatherings in Texas suggest a certain relationship between developments there and the dispersion of glossolaliac experiences northward into Oklahoma. While news from a Christmas convention at Houston, Texas, in 1911 related that "God is working in a wonderful way in Texas and Oklahoma," the Word and Witness, in August, 1912, printed the account of a full blooded Choctaw woman from the state, one afflicted for thirty-eight years with a running sore on her foot, who had been miraculously healed during attendance at a full gospel meeting in Dallas.⁵¹

Likewise, the above-mentioned relationship is strengthened when one considers the outreach of evangelistic efforts by the Reverend Charles F. Parham and those of his associates and converts in Texas. One of these associates, Oscar Jones, a former Baptist minister from Kansas, and a company of some twenty Parham enthusiasts who had traveled by train from Columbus, Kansas, assisted in evangelizing the Houston area in the fall of 1905. During this effort, a revival team under the leadership of Jones and consisting of H. A. Goss and a few additional workers rented the Opera House in nearby Alvin and began a campaign in which "about two hundred were saved and one hundred and thirty-four received the Baptism of the Spirit."⁵² Oscar Jones, however, did not encounter his "personal Pentecost" until 1909 at Seymour, Texas. In

⁵¹Delaney, "Witnessing for Jesus in the Southland," p. 6; and "God's Mighty Power," Word and Witness, VIII, No. 8 (October 20, 1912), p. 3.

⁵²S. Clyde Bailey, Pioneer Marvels of Faith: Wonderful Forty-Six Years Experience (1st ed.; Morristown, Tennessee: Privately Published, Undated), p. 29.

May of that same year he, now "saturated in the fullness of the Spirit," went to Frederick, Oklahoma, from Seymour. Jones, his wife, and three children made the trip in a two-horse hack. They ate previously packed lunches and slept out under the canopies of Heaven during the three-day trip, possessing only 32¢ in finances and having no acquaintances between Seymour and their destination.⁵³ They wrote later, "We could hardly go to sleep at night, for we looked up into the heavens in expectation of our wonderful Lord's return. We thought He was coming very soon and wanted to be ready and watching."⁵⁴

The revival meeting conducted by the Oscar Joneses at Frederick, Tillman county, in 1909 was held in a small schoolhouse. People came from all over the countryside. On the second night the school was filled to capacity and a "breakthrough" was achieved when everyone in the building was converted, with the exception of one man. He, too, "walked the aisle" before the meeting ended. Among the converts were bootleggers who proceeded to destroy their stills and numerous thieves who returned cattle, pigs, chickens, and other stolen properties in complete restitution and consecration to their newly embraced faith.⁵⁵ The Joneses, in a community some twenty-five miles from Frederick, held a second revival. They experienced persecution here when "some of the cowboys of the community began to race around the schoolhouse and shoot their guns."⁵⁶ Too, a cigarette was dropped in the Reverend Mr. Jones'

⁵³ Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

hair as he knelt in prayer by a window during one of the services. And on other occasions the cowboys "rocked" the church and continued to shoot their guns. Nevertheless, a significant harvest was reaped after much prayer and personal sacrifice. While laboring in the community, the Joneses were boarded by a family of six who shared with them their half-dugout or cellar. Their drinking water came from a gypsum spring, and they existed on a meager diet of "water gravy." Following the trials and hardships of this campaign, Oscar Jones and family traveled to Manitou in the northern part of Tillman county to attend a camp meeting being conducted by Evangelist Daniel C. O. Opperman. The three months of very successful revival which they spent in Oklahoma in the summer of 1909 produced a series of initial Pentecostal contacts with numerous western Oklahoma communities from which many Assemblies of God Churches were later born.⁵⁷

Eastern Oklahoma communities of McAlester, Wilburton, Heavener and Panama, and McCurtain in Pittsburg, Latimer, LeFlore and Haskell counties respectively, were the scene of significant charismatic revivals from 1911 to 1913. The history of an early band of Pentecostal believers at Wilburton, Oklahoma, is traceable to 1911 when the community underwent a "great revival."⁵⁸ In a schoolhouse near McAlester, some thirty miles west of Wilburton, seven individuals were "baptized in the Spirit with Bible signs" in late 1912.⁵⁹ And the number of "Spirit-baptized saints" in the vicinity had reached approximately

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Word and Witness, XII, No. 9 (September 20, 1915), p. 3.

⁵⁹ S. D. Goldsmith, "God Working Still in the Land," *ibid.*, VIII, No. 10 (December 20, 1912), p. 3.

eighteen by the spring of the following year.⁶⁰ The "Pentecostal message" came to Panama, Le Flore county, in 1912 when a Reverend Mr. Bonds, his wife, and son, Olan, conducted a revival there which began in the spring and continued until that fall. People from many adjoining communities attended. Among these were two women, Mrs. Gertie Meeks Morgan who was converted and Mrs. Dora Barlow who experienced a "Holy Spirit Baptism."⁶¹ And the J. A. Corbell evangelistic team found no distinguishable ebb in receptivity of the "Pentecostal message" when they also came to Panama for a meeting in the fall of the same year: "The power was falling. People were getting saved in their seats during preaching. Four were baptized in the Spirit. . . ."⁶² However, the infant work at Panama was hindered in its growth by the lack of a permanent minister to shepherd the growing number of converts. But the members of the group continued to carry on with the work, withstanding great persecution. They suffered such indignities as being rotten egged and tomatoed and having pepper thrown in their faces. Nonetheless, stemming from the Bonds' revival of 1912 was the nucleus of a group of believers from which another of the earliest assemblies in the Oklahoma District was formed. And, finally, Pentecostal pioneers carried their distinctive message to McCurtain in Haskell county by 1913 when A. J. Cooper reported "one hundred and twenty-eight baptized in this place," while near the community of

⁶⁰ Charles Williamson, "Revival News From All Points," *ibid.*, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁶¹ W. O. Hatley to the author, July 15, 1966.

⁶² "Revival Fires From Heaven Still Burning," Word and Witness, VIII, No. 8 (October 20, 1912), p. 4.

Heavener, approximately thirty-five miles southeast of McCurtain, there were thirty "Spirit-filled saints."⁶³

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, Tahlequah, in old Indian Territory, in all probability is the oldest Pentecostal center in Oklahoma. The "Pentecostal message" was preached in that Cherokee county community as early as 1905. However, its small group of full-gospel believers did not have a permanent pastor until after the conversion of the Hargis family. This family's conversion, sometime before 1910, was due to an unusual act of God. The youngest son, only ten years of age, met a tragic death after contracting blood poisoning from a splinter in his toe. While on his deathbed, the child beckoned each member of the family to his side and begged him to be converted. Consequently, the entire family was moved to make spiritual decisions for Christ.⁶⁴

The Hargis family was signally instrumental in the organization of Pentecostal work in the Tahlequah area. It was this family that called the Reverend W. T. Gaston to Tahlequah from Arkansas in late 1910 or early 1911 to assume the leadership of the struggling band of Pentecostal believers in that community. And a son, Vache A. Hargis, who later became the first Secretary of the Oklahoma District, often acted as a supply pastor for the congregation when it was without a shepherd.⁶⁵

⁶³ A. J. Cooper, "Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3; and R. L. Fowler, "Revival News From All Points," *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Personal interview with Anderson Cathey, August 18, 1967.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

The Reverend W. T. Gaston's ministry of approximately two years at Tahlequah likewise accounts, in part, for the early stronghold of Pentecostal followers in that part of the state. Gaston, known to many in Arkansas as the young "'walking preacher,' . . . [for he had] hiked hundreds of miles over 'the worst roads that God ever let afflict the earth,'" was of the first in this century to claim the "Spirit's infilling."⁶⁶ His proclamation of this distinctive experience soon produced fruits in the Tahlequah area. Among the earliest residents to undergo a "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" were the members of the Camp family; W. H. Boyles; Anderson Cathey; an elderly Methodist gentleman, Ebenezer Newton; and the Hargis family.⁶⁷ W. H. Boyles, of Cherokee descent, and Anderson Cathey, the "pioneer of Pentecost" in the Nubben Ridge Community near Tahlequah, were both converted and received calls to the ministry while praying together in the woods. Cathey vividly recalls the experience and his later baptism in the Holy Spirit.

For three weeks [my wife and I] . . . prayed almost day and night. Then one night between 9 and 10 O'Clock, [while out in the woods praying with W. H. Boyles] , . . . God came down and saved my soul. A little later, in a meeting out under the trees near the present library, I received the baptism.

I'll never forget when I prayed through to the Holy Ghost. I got power I didn't know what to do with! I came up from the ground preaching a sermon in tongues with my arms lifted to the heavens!⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 296; and C. M. Ward, God Speaks Today (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 40.

⁶⁷ Personal interview with J. L. Haddock, August 17, 1967; and personal interview with Cathey, August 18, 1967.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Numerous Pentecostal forays were conducted in Cherokee county around Tahlequah and nearby communities of Adair county from 1913 to 1915. Among those holding meetings at Tahlequah were Fayette Romines, Mack M. Pinson, and Willard H. Pope.⁶⁹ May Bernice Ferguson, who attended the first General Council of the Assemblies of God at Hot Springs, Arkansas, pioneered works in Adair, Creek, and other Oklahoma counties.⁷⁰ She reported, in November, 1915, of her evangelistic efforts in such communities of Adair county as Bidding Springs and Stilwell:

In our regular Sunday services this summer about six have been saved and out of our little band five or six have received the baptism in the Spirit. Others are seeking and a number of persons have been healed. My prayer is that at least Jesus can say, 'She has done what she could.'⁷¹

In that same year, Mrs. Vivian Strickland also reported of many believers seeking the baptism near Bidding Springs.⁷² Earlier, W. R. Amiot proclaimed the "full-gospel" faith in the nearby community of Christie, Oklahoma.⁷³

With Cherokee county remaining an evangelistic field in the period prior to 1914, Mark Brannon came to communities approximately ten to fifteen miles south-southwest of Tahlequah in the summer of 1913. He

⁶⁹"Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 3; and "Revival News in Homeland," ibid., IX, No. 12 (December 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁷⁰Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 67.

⁷¹Bernice Ferguson, "A Blessed Summer," The Weekly Evangel, No. 116 (November 20, 1915), p. 2.

⁷²Vivian Strickland, "A Needy Field, God Working," ibid., No. 92 (May 29, 1915), p. 1.

⁷³"Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, IX, No. 11 (November 20, 1913), p. 3.

brought with him a lumber mill to support himself and began to "saw lumber and preach Pentecost."⁷⁴ Brannon was followed, in 1915, by James E. Chamless.⁷⁵ The Reverend Mr. Chamless and his wife held a nineteen-day meeting at Qualls, Sequoyah county, shortly after arriving in the area.⁷⁶ By 1917 the church on Old Quall's Creek claimed some fifty-four "Holy Ghost-baptized" individuals. Chamless ministered to these communities for about two years, occupying the position of pastor of the Stone Chapel Community Church during most of this period. Some of the first individuals who "came into Pentecost" under his ministry were Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Haddock, Will McDonald, and Charlie Capps.⁷⁷

Muskogee, located in the county adjoining Cherokee county on the southwest was another early site of Pentecostal activity and a close rival of the Tahlequah and Fifth and Peoria (Tulsa) assemblies as the oldest major vortex of Pentecostal activity in the state. It experienced an influx of Pentecostal trailblazers, beginning around 1910. The first individual to introduce the community and surrounding area to the full-gospel message was Scott Haggard. John Winn, along with a Mrs. Hastie, were also two of the earliest resident "pioneers of Pentecost" in the Muskogee area, the latter receiving her "baptism" under the ministry of the Reverend Mr. Haggard.⁷⁸ Likewise, John W. Welch, a member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, came in 1910

⁷⁴Personal interview with Haddock, August 17, 1967.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶The Weekly Evangel, No. 114 (November 6, 1915), p. 3.

⁷⁷Personal interview with Haddock, August 17, 1967.

⁷⁸Personal interview with Cathey, August 18, 1967.

to Oklahoma as the director and sole minister of the state's fellowship. Welch, characteristically desirous of more of God, had his spiritual appetite whetted while at Muskogee, where he conducted a fruitful six-month revival. He became persuaded that satisfaction of his spiritual hunger lay in receiving the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by tongues" when the evangelistic team of Arthur B. Cox, intermittently active in Oklahoma Pentecostal endeavors from 1906 to 1918, came to Muskogee.⁷⁹ In the following few months, the Reverend Mr. Welch availed himself of every opportunity to counsel and worship with believers of the Pentecostal faith. Fannie Hughes Pope, a young lady at that time, remembers well having "knelt immediately next to Brother Welch, the man destined to be the third General Chairman of the Assemblies of God, as he sought the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in Tulsa."⁸⁰ Shortly thereafter, Welch underwent a charismatic experience and conducted his first revival as a Pentecostal minister for W. T. Gaston at Tahlequah.⁸¹ In addition to the above-mentioned activities in the Muskogee area, Pentecostal trailblazers Fayette Romines and John H. James conducted a week of services there in the spring of 1913. They reported that God was "still saving and baptizing souls"⁸² And, finally, in 1915 J. E. Combs, no doubt unwittingly, gave a most apropos description of the motives of himself and all others who had labored in this pioneer area over the past few years. "I am . . .

⁷⁹ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, pp. 165-66.

⁸⁰ Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁸¹ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 166.

⁸² J. H. James, "Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3.

out for Jesus and for souls."⁸³

Neither Pottawatomie nor Hughes county experienced a flourish of Pentecostal activity in the period prior to 1914. However, the "Pentecostal message" reached Shawnee in the winter of 1912 or 1913 when Fayette Romines found the crowds growing in number and receptivity to the "Pentecostal message."⁸⁴ A few months later, J. I. Miller testified of souls being saved and believers receiving the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" at the Shawnee mission.⁸⁵ Others who preached the full-gospel message in the town the following year were Jacob Miller and Forrest G. Barker.⁸⁶ Barker, who affiliated with the Church of God in Christ before the Assemblies of God were organized, had, a few months earlier, "taken Pentecost" to Wetumka in Hughes county.⁸⁷ And a year later F. J. Berryhill wrote of the power of God falling upon the people during a baptismal service, resulting in several conversions.⁸⁸

Tulsa and Osage counties, important participants in the "dissemination of Pentecost" across the state between 1905 and 1914, are the final areas of Oklahoma to be discussed. Tulsa county, the scene of some of the earliest Pentecostal activity in the state, remained recep-

⁸³ Ibid., XII, No. 10 (October 20, 1915), p. 2.

⁸⁴ Ibid., IX, No. 2 (February 20, 1913), p. 4.

⁸⁵ J. I. Miller, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, IX, No. 11 (November 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁸⁶ F. G. Barker, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, X, No. 3 (March 20, 1914), p. 1.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 1.

⁸⁸ The Christian Evangel, No. 65 (October 31, 1914), p. 4.

tive to the "Pentecostal message" throughout the period. Skiatook, in the extreme northern portion of the county, was "introduced to Pentecost" in the fall of 1911 with the beginning of a revival, marathon in nature. There were church services every night and prayer meetings every afternoon for over three years. Among the numerous evangelists who contributed to the services during this period were J. C. Ament, who initiated the revival; W. E. Hammers, who did a considerable amount of the preaching; and Theodore Smith.⁸⁹ Concerning these meetings, The Christian Evangel of February 20, 1915, reported a number of healings, many conversions, and forty-two "Baptized in the Holy Spirit."⁹⁰ One and one-half months later another report showed an increase in "Baptisms" to seventy-seven.⁹¹ Two epic cases of healing, occurring during this time, would long be remembered. One case involved twenty-two zealous Skiatook church boys. Accepting, as literal, the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection, the boys went to a farmhouse where a lady, four hours earlier, had died. Upon arriving, they found her lying on a cooling board, having been washed and dressed for burial. Picking up the body, they began to mechanically walk it. "Before they could get . . . across the twelve-foot room she was shouting all over the place!"⁹² The lady lived some nine additional years to testify of her miraculous raising from the dead. At the same farmhouse, a bit earlier, another miracle allegedly

⁸⁹Personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Logan Holman, August 7, 1970.

⁹⁰The Christian Evangel, No. 78 (February 20, 1915), p. 3.

⁹¹"Seventy-seven Baptized, Skiatook, Oklahoma," The Weekly Evangel, No. 85 (April 10, 1915), p. 1.

⁹²Personal interview with Holman, August 7, 1970.

occurred. On an icy wintry morning, Mattie Spurgeon stepped to the back porch, slipped on ice, and fractured an arm, causing a bone to pierce the flesh. Her husband, a man of faith, quickly summoned the sons and together they prayed. The bone immediately went back into place, leaving a completely healed arm. That very morning, Mrs. Spurgeon baked bread for her family, using the arm.⁹³

The Skiatook revival, lasting over three years, was itself a significant factor in the "propagation of Pentecost" throughout Tulsa and Osage counties in the years prior to 1914. Several individuals who received charismatic experiences early in the revival were members of the Spurgeon families, Ben, Carl, Ed, Henry, and Mattie; Ray Bernard; Watt Walker; and Logan "Gus" Holman. Holman, converted in 1912, went into the ministry within twelve to fifteen months, serving first as a lay preacher and later as a minister. After a local congregation was organized, around 1915 or 1916, he became its first pastor. He was to shepherd this group on five different occasions, rendering eleven total years of service to the Skiatook congregation. Welford Martin and sister, Gladys, and all of the meeting's early "recipients of the Baptism," with the exception of the older Spurgeons, Henry and Mattie, entered the ministry from the Skiatook church. It has been said, in fact, that this church has produced some three hundred ministers.⁹⁴ Ray Bernard, one of the earliest converts of Skiatook's phenomenal revival of three years, his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bynam, Nora Mingus, and Bertha Bigley Holman traveled north

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

eleven miles to the Osage county community of Avant in the summer of 1913. They were eager to share their new Pentecostal faith. The party started a church, using a building close to Bird Creek on the southern edge of Avant. Two small rooms adjoining the structure served as living quarters during their stay. A number of the community's residents were converted as a result of the summer-long meeting. Among these were the Browns: Elisha, who is believed to have been the church's first pastor; Susie; Rich; Ada; George; and his wife. Others were Mr. and Mrs. Miller, George Hocker, Mr. and Mrs. Orey Hurley, and Ada Perrier. Many of the above received "Pentecostal baptisms."⁹⁵ Likewise, another precursory revival was held at Collinsville, Tulsa county, nine miles east of Skiatook. The Reverend W. R. Amiot conducted this campaign in 1914. Reportedly, one hundred and twenty-five persons were converted and seventy-one "filled with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit."⁹⁶

Starting at Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas in 1901, the "Pentecostal message" spread across many parts of the state of Oklahoma by 1914, with evangelism virtually its sole means of propagation. Likewise it was the zeal and devotion to the message by the people who went out and conducted the meetings that was primarily responsible for the movement's growth during these years. From the beginning there was no denominational organization or official direction to the evangelism that occurred. That had to come later and did come when the need for cooperative effort became apparent.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ W. R. Amiot, "Seventy-one Baptized," The Christian Evangel, No. 66 (November 7, 1914), p. 1.

The disdain for formal organization by many "within Pentecost" during the period from 1901 to 1914 produced a movement of loose associations of churches and ministers. The various kindred fellowships that appeared -- the Apostolic Faith Missions and Churches, Churches of God, Full Gospel Pentecostal Missions, Pentecostal Holiness Churches, Churches of God in Christ, etc. -- soon began to divide due to a lack of organizational guidance, leading inevitably to a looseness in conduct and doctrine. And germinating from these conditions was a consciousness among numerous Pentecostals of the necessity to devise some means of closer fellowship and cooperative effort among the ministers and churches of the movement. A call went forth in the December 20, 1913 issue of the Word and Witness for a "General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ" to convene at Hot Springs, Arkansas, April 2, to 12, 1914.⁹⁷ Endorsers of this initial call were M. M. Pinson, Phoenix, Arizona; A. P. Collins, Fort Worth, Texas; H. A. Goss, Hot Springs, Arkansas; D. C. O. Opperman, Houston, Texas; and E. N. Bell, Malvern, Arkansas.⁹⁸ And in the intervening months before the proposed meeting, other individuals-- including two Oklahomans, W. T. Gaston, Tulsa, and Willard H. Pope, Broken Arrow, offered their endorsements.⁹⁹

The Convention at Hot Springs attracted some three hundred interested believers, with approximately one hundred and twenty

⁹⁷ M. M. Pinson, et al., "General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ," Word and Witness, IX, No. 12 (December 20, 1913), p. 1.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ "General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ," ibid., X, No. 3 (March 20, 1914), p. 1.

registered as delegates. They came by almost every imaginable mode of travel and from twenty states and several foreign nations. Oklahoma was well represented, although none of its delegates performed a major role at the meeting. W. T. Gaston and Willard H. Pope, two early figures destined to become, perhaps, the best known Oklahomans in the fellowship, were numbered among the select circle of founding fathers who assembled at Hot Springs in the spring of 1914.¹⁰⁰ These two Oklahomans, along with a third who was also in attendance, James Hutsell, eventually served as Chairmen (later, Superintendents) of the Oklahoma District.¹⁰¹ S. A. Jamieson and Oscar Jones, non-residents of the state at that time, likewise attended the meeting and later became District Chairmen.¹⁰² Other charter members of the Assemblies of God from Oklahoma were a Mr. Hargis and son, Vache A., the first Secretary of the District, John W. Hudson, C. M. Riggs, and C. O. Haymaker.¹⁰³ May Bernice Ferguson, W. H. Boyles, and Forrest G. Barker complete the list of Oklahomans who are known to have attended the first General Council.¹⁰⁴

Those who attended the convention met to worship and fellowship; more importantly, they met to discuss common Pentecostal concerns.

¹⁰⁰ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 170; and Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

¹⁰¹ Personal interview with Robert E. Goggin, August 8, 1967.

¹⁰² Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 171; and Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

¹⁰³ Personal interview with Cathey, August 18, 1967; Assemblies of God News, IX, No. 12 (December, 1960), p. 5, and VI, No. 10 (October, 1957), p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 67; personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967; and "First General Council Delegates," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2613 (June 7, 1964), p. 3.

They adopted a Preamble to Constitution and a set of Resolutions as a "Magna Charta, a declaration of religion [religious] freedom . . . [and] pledge against sectarianism and bossism. . . ." ¹⁰⁵ This Preamble and set of Resolutions provided the basis for union of a heterogeneous cooperative fellowship composed of autonomous, sovereign churches and devoid of ecclesiastical dominance, a fellowship born of the determination of those at Hot Springs

not to organize or charter a church, denomination or sect, but to have an ANNUAL COUNCIL made up from all Pentecostal Assemblies, Churches and individuals to meet once a year to advise scriptural methods of unity and to attend to business for God. ¹⁰⁶

Likewise, the Preamble dealt with unification in matters of conduct and doctrine, coordination and protection of evangelistic and missionary endeavors, provision of some means of Biblical and classical teaching, and the development of a "printed ministry" -- all subjects of particular concern to those at the Council.

A statement of doctrine as a creed for the fellowship was not adopted at the constitutional meeting but was added later during the 1916 General Council. However, when that body of approved doctrinal tenets was finally adopted, the phenomenal growth of the cooperative fellowship under it, a "Statement of Fundamental Truths," solidly orthodox, wholly vindicated the wisdom of such action. Within ten years of its formation, the fellowship organized at Hot Springs in April, 1914, had not only become a national organization, but the largest Pentecostal denomination -- the General Council of the

¹⁰⁵ E. N. Bell, "Hot Springs Assembly; God's Glory Present," Word and Witness, X, No. 4 (April 20, 1914), p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Assemblies of God.

Significantly, in a further attempt at unification among Pentecostal believers, the charter session at Hot Springs recommended the organization of local assemblies into district or state councils. The state of Oklahoma was one of the first to comply with this recommendation, when in July, 1914, it formed the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God. That District Council's work and growth will be discussed in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

THE OKLAHOMA DISTRICT: A FERTILE FIELD

An attitude of independence within the Pentecostal movement, a resultant looseness in conduct and doctrine, and a consciousness among many Pentecostals of the need of closer fellowship and cooperative effort -- these conditions preceded the organization of the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma, as well as its formation, nationally, at Hot Springs, Arkansas, in April, 1914.

In the years prior to organization of the Assemblies of God, annual campmeetings constituted the primary means of maintaining a semblance of fellowship and unity among Pentecostals in Oklahoma. As mentioned in the previous chapter, an annual Pentecostal campmeeting was being held in Oklahoma City as early as 1908. More than two hundred individuals were attending this event by 1913.¹ Around 1911, Candy Creek, southeast of Avant, became the site of a similar meeting, beginning every July 4. Conducted for many years, it attracted a number of the state's most prominent preachers as camp speakers. "Jew" Arnold, especially popular, was the camp evangelist several different years. A number of the Candy Creek meetings lasted as long as a month.² Likewise, an annual encampment for "Saints of God" from

¹"Pentecostal Camp Meeting," Word and Witness, X, No. 7 (July 20, 1914), p. 2.

²Personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Logan Holman, August 7, 1970.

Oklahoma and surrounding states began operating at Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1913.³ The appearance of this assemblage, along with numerous other inter-state camp meetings, furnished even greater opportunities for communication, fellowship, and cooperation among Pentecostals of the four state region of Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, and adjoining areas.

The Eureka Springs, Arkansas, Inter-State Camp Meeting was perhaps the most important of the southwest's inter-state gatherings in the years immediately preceded the Hot Springs Convention, for the nucleus of the group which eventually initiated the earliest efforts to convene that convention was formed at these annual meetings.⁴ And when the first General Council convened in April, 1914, it stipulated that all business of the Eureka Springs Camp Meeting be transferred to the Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God.⁵ Likewise, the Eureka Springs Camp was the means through which Willard H. Pope first met W. T. Gaston, the eventual first General Chairman of the Oklahoma District. Approximately twenty-five individuals from the Pentecostal band in Tulsa, among whom were Pope and his future wife, Fannie Hughes, traveled to the inter-state camp meeting at Eureka Springs in 1912. A few months later, Pope, desiring a release from duties as ex officio pastor in order to provide leadership for a recently established group of converts at Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, persuaded Gaston to assume the

³"Third Annual Encampment," The Weekly Evangel, No. 96 (June 26, 1915), p. 2.

⁴Mr. & Mrs. Willard H. Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁵C. C. Burnett, "Forty Years Ago, Part Two," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2082 (April 4, 1954), p. 9.

pastorate of the Pentecostal flock of believers in Tulsa.⁶ A camp-meeting, organized in that city sometime earlier, became the major Pentecostal gathering in Oklahoma. Several reports in the Word and Witness indicate that Gaston was in charge of this camp by 1913, at which time it was referred to as "the Oklahoma State Camp."⁷ Evangelist H. A. Goss and wife, upon the invitation of the Reverend W. T. Gaston, brought their tent to Tulsa and conducted the Oklahoma State Camp that year. Beginning in August, its services were held at the Orcult Lake Park, located outside the city limits and accessible by street car. A "round-robin" system provided speakers for the meetings, with such additional evangelists as John H. James, Lemuel C. Hall, W. H. Pope, and M. M. Pinson participating.⁸ Among those attending this full-gospel camp were Fannie Hughes Pope, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Welker, Jim Reeder, Mrs. George Morris, Myrtle Morris Riddle, Forrest G. Barker, Bess Johnson Boley, and Emma Scott Bartley. Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Britt, Faye Allman, Arthur Pope, Lorene Phillips Thompson, Ernest Funk, and Charlie Piper were also there. Completing the list of known attendants were Mr. and Mrs. E. K. Gray, Venus Vogel Hanover, Ted Gray, Beulah Bailey, Rupert Bailey, and Nora Price.⁹ Hundreds of individuals came to the meetings "to either participate in or witness manifestations of the strong belief . . . [held by those Apostolic Faith or Pentecost-

⁶Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁷Word and Witness, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 1; and "Revival Fires at Home," *ibid.*, IX, No. 8 (August 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁸Ethel Goss, Winds of God (New York: Comet Press, 1958), p. 162.

⁹Personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Riddle, August 10, 1967.

al believers]."¹⁰

Pentecostals of Oklahoma, assembled at the annual state camp of 1914, were one of the earliest groups in the nation to organize a district or state council and affiliate with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Hot Springs, Arkansas. The Reverend W. T. Gaston, as general manager of the Tulsa camp, spearheaded much of that effort. In the July 20 issue of Word and Witness, he made the following announcement:

The annual encampment of Pentecostal saints for the state of Oklahoma and nearby states will be held at Tulsa, . . . beginning July 23 and continuing ten days or longer as God may lead. The full gospel will be preached, with the Holy Ghost sent from heaven. . . . Meals, tents, and cots will be provided on the grounds for a free will offering. Don't forget to bring your own bedding and toilet articles. Come for the entire campmeeting.¹¹

The site of the camp was a plot of land renamed "Assembly Park."¹²

The plot was covered with beautiful shade trees and rested on the bank of the Arkansas River adjoining the Sand Springs Streetcar Line about a mile from Tulsa. Charles Page, a wealthy oilman, donated the property and a \$3,000 tabernacle, 80 feet by 100 feet, for the annual Pentecostal gathering.¹³ The tabernacle, described as a roofed-over

¹⁰"Church Convention Attracting Crowds--Assemblies of God Open Their Camp Meeting Here," The Tulsa Daily World (July 25, 1914), p. 5.

¹¹"Pentecostal Camp Meeting," Word and Witness, X, No. 7 (July 20, 1914), p. 2.

¹²"Holy Rollers' Camp Meeting on Today--Will Hold State Meeting at Assembly Park Near Sand Springs," The Tulsa Daily World (July 22, 1914), p. 5.

¹³Ibid.; and T. K. Leonard, "My Summer Campmeeting Tour," The Christian Evangel, No. 59 (September 19, 1914), p. 1.

platform, was equipped with home-made benches and lighted with electricity.¹⁴ A local newspaper, in an article headlined "Holy Rollers Make Permanent Camp," described the camp scene on the second evening of the meeting as

white with the tents of the campers who have come from all parts of the state to take part in this annual religious festival. A big tent has been erected as a dining hall for those who are living at the camp, and another big tent is being used as a kitchen in which all the needs are cooked in common. More than sixty small sleeping tents are on the grounds and at the meetings the many rollers from Tulsa swell the audience to something like five hundred.¹⁵

Six days later, some one hundred tents were pitched on the campgrounds. And the large tabernacle, capable of accommodating one thousand, was being comfortably filled each night, with expectations of an over-flow crowd before the end of the week.¹⁶

The Oklahoma State Camp of 1914 was attended by some of the most prominent Pentecostal ministers from the states of Arkansas, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio, and Oklahoma.¹⁷ The Reverend W. T. Gaston, whose parsonage was located near the campgrounds, was assisted in the services by special speakers H. A. Goss, John W. Welch, Thomas K. Leonard, Arch P. Collins, and John H. James.¹⁸ Among those Oklahoma

¹⁴"Church Convention Attracting Crowds--Assemblies of God Open Their Camp Meeting Here," The Tulsa Daily World (July 25, 1914), p.5.

¹⁵"Holy Rollers Make Permanent Camp," The Tulsa Democrat (July 24, 1914), p. 3.

¹⁶"Visiting Ministers Attend Camp Meeting," The Tulsa Daily World (July 30, 1914), p. 10.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸"Stirring Scenes at Camp Meetings," The Tulsa Democrat (July 31, 1914), p. 12; and Leonard, "My Summer Campmeeting Tour," p. 1.

ministers and workers attending the camp were Thomas M. Gray, Willard H. Pope, Vache A. Hargis, Kenneth Riddle, and Thomas J. O'Neal.¹⁹

Other Oklahomans believed to have been in attendance were C. O. Haymaker, S. M. Padgett, J. W. Hudson, M. G. Dunlap, F. E. Conrad, and J. I. Miller.²⁰

Special business sessions were conducted at the Oklahoma camp on July 28 and July 29, 1914, in which a state council was established -- "The Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God."²¹ The framework for this body of believers, "composed of all the Pentecostal people of the state of Oklahoma and visiting brethren who may be present while the council is meeting," was patterned after the Hot Springs council.²² Opposing sectarianism and declaring themselves in harmony with the General Council, the delegates adopted a resolution saying,

'Whereas it is necessary that all of God's people cooperate and work together with God and each other, therefore be it resolved that we endorse and adopt the preamble and resolutions adopted by the General Council of the Assemblies of God in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in April, 1914, as the constitution of the Oklahoma District Council.'²³

Thus, as was typical of most early councils in the nation, the Oklahoma District Council did not, during its first session, draw up a constitu-

¹⁹Personal interview with Fred Eiting, July 8, 1967; "District Council Established," The Christian Evangel, No. 55 (August 22, 1914), p. 1; and personal interviews with Riddle, August 10, 1967, Mr. & Mrs. O. E. French, August 11, 1967, and Robert Goggin, August 8, 1967.

²⁰Personal interview with C. O. Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

²¹"Stirring Scene at Camp Meeting," The Tulsa Democrat (July 31, 1914), p. 12.

²²"District Council Established," p. 1.

²³Ibid.

tion and by-laws. It simply passed certain standing resolutions and functioned on their strength. At its genesis, the financial assets of the Council, including church property, etc., are estimated to have been somewhat less than \$25,000.²⁴ Officers of the District, all appointed to one-year terms, were: W. T. Gaston, chairman; Vache A. Hargis, secretary; and Willard H. Pope, treasurer.²⁵ The Oklahoma State Camp ended on Sunday, August 2, 1914. A number of individuals were ordained to the ministry in services during that day.²⁶ Communion and baptismal services were also planned; however, it was decided, instead, to dispense with the latter and conduct a "footwashing service." Although they believed it to be strange, Mr. and Mrs. O. E. French, practicing Presbyterians visiting the camp, were persuaded to remain for the "footwashing" when evangelist Thomas K. Leonard of Findlay, Ohio, admonished the congregation, "I would rather follow the practice of footwashing and later discover it unnecessary, than fail in keeping an essential practice."²⁷ Finally, on that closing day of the camp, a local newspaper reported this rather perceptive observation from those ministers who had attended its services throughout the past week: ". . . The foundation is being laid for the most beneficial campmeeting ever conducted by the Assemblies of God in the

²⁴Personal interview with Goggin, June 2, 1966.

²⁵"District Council Established," p. 1.

²⁶Leonard, "My Summer Campmeeting Tour," p. 1.

²⁷Personal interview with French, August 11, 1967.

Southwest."²⁸

Regardless of the promising future which many at the first Oklahoma District Council envisioned for the Assemblies of God in the state, organizational emphases were accepted only gradually. Pentecostals in Oklahoma were no exception to the majority of those within the movement who, particularly during the first quarter of the twentieth century, possessed a general fear of close supervision and central organization -- zealously guarding the sovereignty of the individual and the local church. Thus, they were firmly opposed to outside ecclesiastical interference in the business of local congregations and the customary stress placed by organization upon church membership.²⁹ Although ultimately chosen as the first Chairman of the Oklahoma District Council, the Reverend W. T. Gaston, while pastor of the Fifth and Peoria Church in Tulsa, was among those who expressed such opposition. He believed that the only requirement of importance was that an individual's name be "in the Lamb's Book of Life."³⁰ He saw no need for the recording of names on church rolls and the transfer of memberships between churches by letter.³¹

Nonetheless, organizational acceptance did come as individuals increasingly recognized the importance of cooperative effort. Moreover, the sound doctrinal and organizational pattern drawn up by the General Council at Hot Springs contributed immeasurably to the warm reception

²⁸"Special Services at the Tabernacle," The Tulsa Daily World (August 2, 1914), p. 12.

²⁹Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

³⁰Personal interview with French, August 11, 1967.

³¹Ibid.

which the Assemblies of God received in the state. The Grubbs and Newby families of Ryan had conducted revivals in Oklahoma for seven years, when they met leaders of the cooperative fellowship -- A. P. Collins, S. A. Jamieson, and others -- who introduced them to its "Fundamentals of Truth" in 1916. E. L. Newby later reported:

My early teachers told me to stay with the Word of God. . . . When I read the sixteen fundamentals of the Assemblies of God, I realized these were what I believed. . . .

If we stay right scripturally, we are right spiritually; otherwise, we can go astray. 'In the multitude of counselors there is safety.'³²

The existence of numerous independent, Pentecostal churches throughout the state prior to the Oklahoma District's organization necessitated the development of a District procedure whereby those churches could acquire District affiliation. Each church desiring to affiliate with the District Council was required to hold a business meeting in which it applied for recognition. This process, referred to as "Setting the Church in Order," involved the calling of a district official to conduct the business, the adoption of a set of rules as a church constitution, approval of General Council fellowship and doctrine, and the election of a pastor and other officials for the congregation.³³ The minutes of 1924 contained a section entitled "Extracts of Previous Minutes of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God" in which a request was also made that a list of the membership

³² E. L. Newby, "I Remember," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2609 (May 10, 1964), p. 15.

³³ Personal interview with J. Roswell Flower, June 13, 1966.

of an assembly be recorded at the time it was set in order.³⁴ At least eight churches, all in existence at the time of district organization, affiliated, it is believed, within the following five years. Included in this group were churches at Tahlequah, Fifth and Peoria in Tulsa, Sparks, Panama, Broken Arrow, Wellston, Claremore, and Shawnee. In order to consider each of these churches' history it is essential to go into some detail, thereby tracing an individual congregation to its ultimate affiliation with the district.³⁵

The history of the Tahlequah Assembly of God Church begins with the conversion of the Hargis family. This family called W. T. Gaston to Tahlequah from Arkansas in 1910 to become the church's first pastor. The group, conducting services in old rented buildings when the Reverend Mr. Gaston arrived, continued to do so until the beginning of summer. An open tabernacle with a saw-dust floor also served as a meeting place; however, it was too cold to congregate in during the winter.³⁶ Consequently, between 1911 and 1913, a small building was constructed at the location of the present church, 300 North Maple.³⁷

Many early Pentecostals from the Tahlequah assembly ventured out to evangelize the surrounding area. In 1915 W. H. Boyles, part Cherokee Indian, and Kenneth Riddle held a meeting among Boyles' own tribal people. They conducted the revival eighteen miles south of Tahlequah. Their big tent was completely filled each night with some five hundred

³⁴ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 10.

³⁵ Lack of evidence excluded other existing churches from above list.

³⁶ Personal interview with Eiting, July 8, 1967.

³⁷ Personal interview with J. L. Haddock, August 17, 1967.

inside, and many more were standing on the outside. The team next went to Stilwell, twenty-five miles south-east of Tahlequah, to hold meetings. Huge crowds also attended this revival. At its conclusion, a rather unorthodox baptismal service was conducted. The "young, green enthusiasts," using Barren Fork River as a baptistry, merely "dunked" their baptismal candidates without the traditional Trinitarian rite -- "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."³⁸

The Tahlequah assembly's history reveals an impressive list of early day figures who served as its pastors, among which were John W. Welch, V. A. Hargis, Robert Freeman, J. A. Freeman, Fred Eiting, and S. L. Shockey.³⁹ Having as its pastors individuals so intimately involved in the events which led to the organization of the Oklahoma District Council, and individuals whose leadership roles were so vital to the district after its formation, it is believed that the church affiliated in the earliest years of the district's history, possibly 1914, 1915, or 1916. In any case, the District Council Minutes, 1924, lists Tahlequah as formally affiliated in a year prior to 1924.⁴⁰

The Fifth and Peoria Assembly in Tulsa more nearly qualified as the "Mecca" of the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma than did any other district-affiliated church. To a host of pioneer ministers, evangelists, missionaries, and lay-workers, "Fifth and Peoria," with its consistently prominent pastors, its permanent edifice for worship, and its

³⁸ Personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967.

³⁹ Personal interview with Anderson Cathey, August 18, 1967.

⁴⁰ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 8.

constantly increasing membership, epitomized "Pentecost" and the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma throughout the formative years of 1914 to 1929. The congregation can date itself at least to 1908 when in August of that year Charles Parham was enlisted to conduct a revival under the persuasion of Mrs. C. O. Fry. At this meeting many of the individuals who later made up the membership of Fifth and Peoria were converted. Upon Parham's departure, Mrs. Fry continued as leader (deaconess) of the fledgling group, with several individuals "receiving the Baptism" in the fall of 1908.⁴¹

The small Tulsa band spent some years trying to establish a permanent meeting place. Their first location was founded in 1909, in an old abandoned Methodist church on East Second Street and Cincinnati.⁴² Still a bit later the group moved to a court room on Second Street, and in 1911 the congregation moved into a small store building on Brady and Cincinnati. A five-year lease was contracted on this building. In 1912, the group constructed its first permanent structure: a one-room building twenty feet by forty feet, located just west of the store building on Brady. This humble structure was built through sacrifice as exemplified by that of Mrs. George Morris and her daughter, who walked the considerable distance to church from the Fairview Community in order to save bus fare, which amount was, in turn, invested in the construction of the edifice of worship.⁴³ In

⁴¹Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁴²Personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967.

⁴³Ibid.

1915, the three-year old structure on Brady Street was moved to the church's present location at Fifth and Peoria.⁴⁴ This move was necessitated by the poor location near the railroad track and by the approaching expiration of the five-year lease.⁴⁵ The pastor, W. T. Gaston and Jim Reeder, affectionately known as "Daddy Reeder," searched Tulsa for the right location. When they came to the corner of Fifth and Peoria, Reeder threw up his arms and said, "This is where the Lord wants our church." The small building on Brady was pulled through mud and snow by two donkeys. When this structure was outgrown, a new one, thirty by sixty-five feet was built.⁴⁶ Because of the church's perilous financial condition, this structure was designed in such a fashion that it could easily be converted into a garage, if the risky financial venture failed.⁴⁷

During the early years the congregation was held together by the personal magnetism of Mrs. Fry, but the need for a trained, full-time pastor was widely felt. Mrs. Fry was assisted at times by other ministers, one of whom, W. H. Pope, would eventually assume duties as ex-officio pastor until the first church structure was erected.⁴⁸ David Hockersmith became the church's first full-time pastor; he served less

⁴⁴Personal interview with French, August 11, 1967.

⁴⁵Personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967.

⁴⁶Personal interview with French, August 11, 1967.

⁴⁷Personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967.

⁴⁸Pope to the author, July 2, 1970; and personal interview with Riddle, August 10, 1967.

than a year and was followed by Gaston.⁴⁹ S. A. Jamieson was called as the next pastor in 1916, Gaston having resigned. Other pastors during the succeeding formative years were a Reverend Cunningham, H. E. Boley, and Jonathan Perkins.⁵⁰

Two churches in Lincoln county, Sparks, and Wellston, had a continuous existence following their affiliation with the Assemblies of God at early dates. The Sparks area was exposed to the Pentecostal message as early as 1912, when Alonzo Horn and Al Humbard conducted revival meetings at Pleasant Grove School House, seven miles from Sparks.⁵¹ It was not until March 28, 1919, however, that the group officially became affiliated with the District and General Council of the Assemblies of God. C. M. Riggs, State Evangelist, held a revival and set the Sparks church in order at that time. Aggie James, a convert of the 1912 Horn-Humbard Revival, was the pastor at the time of affiliation.⁵²

The assembly at Wellston was one of the best known or most active early day churches to affiliate with the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God. Although the date of the Wellston assembly's affiliation with the Oklahoma District Council is not known, the 1924 Oklahoma District Council Minutes showed it set in order sometime

⁴⁹ Ibid.; and "More Revival Fires," Word and Witness, IX, No. 2 (February 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁵⁰ Personal interviews with Eiting, July 8, 1967 and Riddle, August 10, 1967.

⁵¹ Opal Selph to the author, September 28, 1967.

⁵² C. M. Riggs, "Reports From the Field," The Christian Evangel No. 284-85 (April 19, 1919), p. 14.

prior to that year.⁵³

According to one of the few remaining charter members, Allie Grooms Hughes, the Wellston pulpit in the earliest of days, was graced by every single denominational official elected at the First General Council in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1914, as well as other outstanding Pentecostal pioneers. This fact would seem to attest to the prominence of this pioneer church. Among those filling the Wellston pulpit on different occasions of evangelistic effort were such men of renown in the denomination as E. N. Bell, J. W. Welch, S. A. Jamison, W. T. Gaston, and George W. Hardcastle, Senior, along with others who became pioneers of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God. Included in the latter group were individuals such as Harry Boley, Glenn and Gordon Millard, Fred Eiting, and Aggie James.⁵⁴

Likewise, the earliest pastors who served the Wellston church were some of the outstanding ministers of the region and district. Alonzo Horn was the church's first pastor. He came in 1913 and held a series of very successful meetings. He remained with the group until sometime in 1914. Vache Hargis followed, with Joe Rosselli becoming the church's minister in 1915. He was succeeded by Thomas J. O'Neal, who served from 1916 to 1917. A Reverend Mr. Grubbs assumed the pastoral duties in 1917. The next minister of the Wellston congregation was Calvin M. Riggs, who served the church in 1918.⁵⁵ Dexter E. Collins' first pastorate was at Wellston in the early 1920's. Under his

⁵³ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Selph to the author, September 20, 1967.

⁵⁵ Ibid., September 5, 1967.

leadership the church had several highly successful meetings, and the outreach of the church was felt for miles around. Many converts of the Wellston assembly went out and pioneered churches, and "Pentecost" was preached in various surrounding communities. C. O. Haymaker conducted one such meeting in the old Garden School House near Wellston. He stated, that this was one of his hardest tests: "My children had to sleep on the floor of the school house which was full of centipedes."⁵⁶ At the beginning of this particular meeting, a Negro lady, afflicted with what was believed to be dropsy, requested prayer for her healing. Against the advice of many, Haymaker went to her home and prayed. The next morning the lady's husband told Mr. Haymaker that his wife, who had not taken a step for over a year, was up and walking around. This incident along with other similar ones helped "ignite the fires of Pentecost in this area and it just kept spreading and spreading."⁵⁷

Introduced to the Pentecostal message in 1912, the Panama Assembly likewise ranked among the oldest and the best known affiliates of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God. Survival for the Panama believers was a constant struggle up into the 1920's. Revival efforts were met with persecution, and the small flock had no pastor to shepherd it. The persecution was so intense that the first building, begun around 1920, was burned before it could be completed. However, the church survived through the means of cottage prayer meetings.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ W. O. Hatley to the author, July 15, 1966.

Some of the early pastors of the Panama church were: Ed Williams, Robie Harrison, and Orvall Painter. R. E. Shrader was pastor of the church in 1919.⁵⁹ The Panama assembly is listed as an affiliated church of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God in the 1924 District Council Minutes.⁶⁰ A reasonable assumption would be that it was affiliated as early as 1917 since Reverend C. E. Arnold, from Panama, was listed as in attendance at the 1917 Oklahoma District Council.⁶¹

The labors of an unusually large number of early-day Pentecostal pioneers in the Shawnee area were responsible for the establishment and ultimate affiliation of an assembly there with the Oklahoma District. The first known workers in the Shawnee area were Pentecostal trailblazers Fayette Romines and J. I. Miller. They both reported of Pentecostal meetings in 1913. One year later, Forrest and Ethel Barker became the leaders of the Shawnee group, and in March, 1914, the Reverend Jacob Miller came to assist them in the work.⁶² The Barkers remained "acting pastors" for the believers until the Summer of 1915, when they left to become missionaries in Peru.⁶³ Another evangelist to labor at Shawnee was William E. Booth-Clibborn. His effort was around April, 1915.⁶⁴ The next month, May, 1915, the

⁵⁹ Ibid.; and The Christian Evangel, No. 304-05 (September 6, 1919), p. 13.

⁶⁰ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 8.

⁶¹ Ibid., 1917, p. 2.

⁶² F. G. Barker, "Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, X, No. 3 (March 20, 1914), p. 1.

⁶³ Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁶⁴ William E. Booth-Clibborn, "William E. Booth-Clibborn Reports from Shawnee, Oklahoma," The Weekly Evangel, No. 88 (May 1, 1915), p. 4.

Willard H. Pope evangelistic party came to Shawnee. The members of the party were: Willard and Fannie Pope; Sam and Alice Shockey; and Faye and Grace Williamson and their two children. This campaign was held in the town's convention hall at first, but it later moved into a church remembered a half century later, as Lutheran.⁶⁵ The above-mentioned convention hall was used again in early July, 1915, when a third annual interstate camp meeting was held in Shawnee. The mayor allowed the fifteen hundred capacity hall to be used free of charge.⁶⁶ Believers from all of Oklahoma and the near-by states were invited to this encampment.⁶⁷ In June, 1919, the Shawnee assembly invited C. M. Riggs, one of the district presbyters. He officiated at the service affiliating the assembly with the Oklahoma District.⁶⁸

A number of precursory revivals, beginning as early as May, 1913, led to the eventual organization of an Assemblies of God church in Claremore. The Reverend Jacob Miller reported the results of a revival he held in Claremore in the May 20, 1913 issue of Word and Witness. A few months later J. H. James preached a meeting in the town. And the W. H. Popes conducted an extended revival in Claremore, beginning in January, 1915. Of this meeting Pope reported, "When we came here there were just a few discouraged saints who were standing

⁶⁵ Pope to the author, July 2, 1967.

⁶⁶ F. G. Barker, "Shawnee, Oklahoma," Word and Witness, XII, No. 6 (June 20, 1915), p. 3.

⁶⁷ "Third Annual Encampment," The Weekly Evangel, No. 96 (June 26, 1915), p. 2.

⁶⁸ Jessie I. Miller, "Reports From the Field," The Christian Evangel, No. 294-95 (June 28, 1919), p. 14.

faithfully."⁶⁹ Resulting from the Pope meeting were some thirty-five to forty conversions and several "infillings of the Holy Spirit." Shortly after the Popes' meeting, July, 1915, F. O. Burnett was appointed as pastor of the small Claremore group.⁷⁰ Arthur R. Donaldson became pastor of the church on January 12, 1919. While he was pastor, the church was "set in order." The Reverend S. A. Jamieson, Chairman of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, came to oversee the formal affiliation which occurred within the first three months of 1919.⁷¹

Another early District-affiliated assembly was that of Broken Arrow whose existence grew out of a revival held in 1912. This congregation eventually affiliated with the General Council on July 13, 1917, under the pastorate of J. R. Evans. In 1912 the Methodists of Broken Arrow leased a tent for a series of meetings, terminating the effort after only a few days. Local Pentecostal believers recognized the situation as offering an ideal opportunity to carry on with evangelistic efforts of their own. The tent was sub-leased from the Methodists and, in August, 1912, Willard H. Pope and a party of workers from Tulsa came to Broken Arrow to conduct a meeting. Pope, at this time only nineteen years of age, "preached the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation in the first week of revival!" The party's evangelistic efforts at Broken Arrow were especially successful among the young

⁶⁹"Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3; "Revival Fires at Home," ibid., IX, No. 8 (August 20, 1913), p. 3; Pope to the author, July 2, 1970; and W. H. Pope, "Nearly Forty-two Saved," The Weekly Evangel, No. 83 (March 27, 1915), p. 2.

⁷⁰Ibid., No. 96 (June 26, 1915), p. 1.

⁷¹Christian Evangel, No. 278-79 (March 8, 1919), p. 14.

people who were attracted to him.⁷² He issued a call for help to a friend, M. M. Pinson, who came from Alabama to assist the youthful revivalist as did Herbert Buffum.⁷³ A flood of conversions resulted from these efforts, and a church was organized. Among the pioneer members were: The McAnnallys, Charles Bowles, the Martin family, and the Bagbys. Other charter members were: a Mr. Couch, George Carriger, and Peter Davis.⁷⁴ In addition some of the pioneer members were: John R. Melzger, Mrs. Nellie Hurd, and S. E. Beckham.⁷⁵ Pope was closely associated with the Broken Arrow church in its early years, having served as pastor on three different occasions. He first served as pastor following the original August, 1912, revival and helped erect the first edifice while serving as pastor for a second time.⁷⁶ This "all white" thirty by fifty building was completed in the fall of 1914.⁷⁷ In addition to Pope, other men believed to have served as pastors during the early stages of the Broken Arrow church were: Peter Davis, November 7, 1913 to March, 1914; George Carriger; Joe Rosselli, March 1915; Will Jones, June, 1915; M. M. Pinson, approximately 1916; J. R. Evans, July, 1917; and Paul Bucher,

⁷²Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Assembly of God, Minutes, May 16, 1917, p. 1; and Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁷³Word and Witness, VIII, No. 8 (October 20, 1912), p. 2; and Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Personal interview with S. E. Beckham, August 10, 1967.

⁷⁶Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

⁷⁷The Christian Evangel, No. 62 (October 10, 1914), p. 4.

September, 1919.⁷⁸ Ultimately returning as pastor in 1918, Pope, again assisted in erecting a building, the first mysteriously burned earlier that year.⁷⁹ The new building was dedicated on July 13, 1919. Elders J. W. Welch, S. A. Jamieson, and others came to help in the dedication service. The all-day meeting, including a large free dinner, was preceded by a week-long chain of prayer "going up to God for his blessing and for a great visitation of his presence."⁸⁰ It was with these beginnings that this church rose to preeminence in the Oklahoma District.

The Oklahoma District, organized in July, 1914, was born at the crest of a wave of Pentecostal evangelism which swept the state in the years from 1913 to 1918. The District, encompassing all of Oklahoma in area, continued to be a "fertile field for Pentecost" in these years.

A ten-county tract of eastern Oklahoma was the object of intense Pentecostal evangelization during the above-mentioned period. Communities in Okmulgee, McIntosh, and Muskogee counties were recipients of the Pentecostal message at that time. Fayette Romines and John H. James reported in May, 1913, being "in a battle for the Lord" at Hitchita. Approximately a month later, Sam Berryhill held a meeting

⁷⁸ Pope to the author, July 2, 1967; personal interview with Beckham, August 10, 1967; The Weekly Evangel, No. 83 (March 27, 1915), p. 2; Word and Witness, No. 6 (June 20, 1915), p. 8; Broken Arrow, Oklahoma Assembly of God, Minutes, May 16, 1917, p. 1; and Paul C. Bucher, "Reports From the Fields," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 318-19 (December 13, 1919), p. 14.

⁷⁹ Pope to the author, July 2, 1967.

⁸⁰ "Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: Big Church Dedication," The Christian Evangel, No. 284-85 (April 19, 1919), p. 13.

at nearby Middle Creek "with much blessing to many souls."⁸¹ And within the next month or two, evangelist Romines conducted services in the Dewar community.⁸²

An evangelistic party, among which was S. E. Beckham, came to Okmulgee around 1918. At that time, only a few Pentecostals were in the area. Possibly a year later, the Reverend Fred Eiting, coming from a successful three-month mid-winter revival in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, was there, likewise, for a campaign.⁸³

A little band of Pentecostals at Morris began their own services in the summer of 1914, although they had no special speaker. Other meetings were held that year in the communities of Boynton and Hanna.⁸⁴ In the spring of the previous year, the team of Fayette Romines and John H. James were in Muskogee for a week of evangelistic efforts.⁸⁵ The east central part of Muskogee county experienced, in that year, a revival at Box, followed by ones at Webbers Falls and McLain in 1914.⁸⁶ Likewise, W. R. Amiot held meetings that year at Gore,

⁸¹J. H. James, "Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3; and Sam Berryhill, "Good News in the Kingdom," *ibid.*, IX, No. 6 (June 20, 1913), p. 5.

⁸²Fayette Romines, "Revival Fires at Home," *ibid.*, IX, No. 8 (August 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁸³Personal interviews with S. E. Beckham, August 10, 1967, and Eiting, July 8, 1967.

⁸⁴W. C. Winn, "Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, X, No. 7 (July 20, 1914), p. 2; "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, X, No. 5 (May 20, 1914), p. 3; and The Christian Evangel, No. 61 (October 3, 1914), p. 2.

⁸⁵James, "Revival News From All Points," p. 3.

⁸⁶Earl Bogan, "Good News in the Kingdom," Word and Witness, IX, No. 6 (June 20, 1913), p. 5; C. Fairbanks, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, X, No. 3 (March 20, 1914), p. 1; and The Christian Evangel, No. 71 (December 19, 1914), p. 4.

Sequoyah county, in which "twenty-five [were] saved and twenty received the Holy Ghost."⁸⁷

Pittsburgh, Haskell, Latimer, and LeFlore counties, from 1913 to 1918, were also the scene of numerous Pentecostal revivals held in such communities as Quinton, Canadian, Whitefield, Blaine, Cowlington, and Calhoun.⁸⁸ The services at Calhoun were conducted in 1915 by Willie Jones, who, earlier that year, held a meeting at Broken Bow, McCurtain county, where Willie Welchel, likewise conducted a revival a few months later.⁸⁹ The Reverend Alonzo Horn and wife, accompanied by William E. Booth-Clibborn, a relative of the English founder of the Salvation Army, rented the Opera House at Wilburton, Latimer county, for services in the late summer of 1915.⁹⁰

Both Cherokee and Adair counties, as mentioned in Chapter II, also experienced Pentecostal evangelistic visitations in such locations as Tahlequah, Christie, Biddings Springs, and Stilwell in this period from 1913 to 1918.

Choctaw county, in the southeastern corner of the state and bordering on Texas was, likewise, an active field of Pentecostal

⁸⁷ W. R. Amiot, "Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, X, No. 5 (May 20, 1914), p. 3.

⁸⁸ J. E. Combs, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 3; Word and Witness, XII, No. 10 (October 20, 1915), p. 2; William Click, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, IX, No. 10 (October 20, 1913), p. 3; Word and Witness, IX, No. 8 (August 20, 1913), p. 4; C. E. Shields and R. F. Smith, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 3; and The Weekly Evangel, No. 114 (November 6, 1915), p. 2.

⁸⁹ The Christian Evangel, No. 75 (January 23, 1915), p. 4; and Willie Jones, "Revival at Broken Bow," The Weekly Evangel, No. 100 (July 24, 1915), p. 2.

⁹⁰ Word and Witness, XII, No. 9 (September 20, 1915), p. 3.

evangelism in the five years prior to 1918. The Pentecostal message attracted crowds of seven or eight hundred, J. M. Murray reported in October, 1914. The Reverend Mr. Murray's meetings at Boswell drew such a crowd -- due in part, no doubt, to certain mysterious occurrences in the community.

Some saw smoke pour out of a tent and went to see who had set it on fire. Upon reaching there, they found no fire. [Then] one night as people were returning from a meeting, . . . suddenly the heavens were lit up as bright as day. The light went toward the North and the report that followed said it jarred the ground and shook the houses.⁹¹

The "revival fires," however, were reported as still burning nine months later, "The Lord is working. The people seem to be stirred up more than ever."⁹² Also feeling a spiritual urge to minister in the Choctaw Nation, A. C. Bates and wife, living in Texas, sold their furniture and purchased tickets to Oklahoma. Arriving at Boswell in 1918, the Bates went out into the country about nine miles and began to preach under the shade of some trees. After a gracious revival there, they traveled further into "the bush." Services were held there under a brush arbor which doubled as their sleeping quarters. The Reverend Mr. Bates later stated:

We cooked our food in a stove set up under the shade of a tree. The country was dry and the hungry hogs were roaming the country side in search of food. They would open our stove and eat the food if it wasn't guarded. . . .

God gave us a gracious revival Many of those people were bootleggers, hog thieves, many had never heard

⁹¹Ibid., X, No. 10 (October 20, 1914), p. 4.

⁹²The Weekly Evangel, No. 101 (July 31, 1915), p. 3.

a sermon in their lives. But, Oh, the shouts and praises that ascended from their souls as they found the Saviour precious to their hearts.⁹³

Bates was also an early "propagator of Pentecost" at nearby Soper, Oklahoma, as was John Hart.⁹⁴

The major evangelistic thrust by Pentecostals throughout Oklahoma, occurring from 1913 to 1918, appears to have been, likewise, concentrated in approximately a dozen southwestern counties of the state, among which were Tillman, Jackson, Greer, and Kiowa counties. Frederick and surrounding areas were evangelized by the Reverend Oscar Jones and his wife in 1909. Apparently the tide of revival had ebbed, however, for Mrs. G. S. Mills of Frederick, writing to the Word and Witness in the spring of 1913, expressed the need of "a good preacher and good worker to hold a meeting for us."⁹⁵ A young Pentecostal enthusiast, L. S. Purdue, reported in December, 1915, from Martha, Oklahoma, on his ". . . [ministry] in open fields" where Pentecost had not been preached.⁹⁶ And O. L. Pitkin, earlier that year, issued an urgent call for workers at Elmer:

We have a fine place for meeting--a nice shady grove.
If we could not get a preacher with a tent, we could easily
make an altar We want one who preaches salvation

⁹³ A. C. Bates, "Gospel Message and Songs," phonograph record, privately produced.

⁹⁴ Personal interview with William T. McFarland, July 18, 1970.

⁹⁵ Mrs. G. S. Mills, "Revival News From All Points," Word and Witness, IX, No. 5 (May 20, 1913), p. 3.

⁹⁶ L. S. Purdue, "First Year In the Ministry," The Weekly Evangel, No. 120 (December 18, 1915), p. 4.

from all sin, and confession, and the Baptism as in Acts 2:4.⁹⁷

Laboring in the Reed community in the summer of 1915, C. E. Shields and wife found the people to have "heart[s]. . . open for what God has in store for them."⁹⁸ About twelve miles northeast of Reed, a band of Pentecostal people was organized at Mangum in the spring of that same year, while the following request for prayer came from Lone Wolf, Oklahoma: "Pray that I may receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost."⁹⁹

Pentecostal evangelistic endeavors were also made in Jefferson, Stephens, and Comanche counties between 1913 and 1918. A Reverend Mr. Mitchell and band from Fort Worth conducted a meeting at Wray's Chapel near Ryan, Oklahoma, in the autumn of 1913. Al E. Humbard was at Cruce in revival that same autumn. The following year, 1914, John H. James held a camp meeting at Waurika, and John Tribble organized, around 1918, a small band of believers at Ringling, the latter eventually becoming the third church "set-in-order" south of Oklahoma City.¹⁰⁰ The Reverend F. O. Burnett's ministry at Lawton, Comanche

⁹⁷ O. L. Pitkin, "Urgent Call for Workers, Elmer, Oklahoma," *ibid.*, No. 96 (June 26, 1915), p. 1.

⁹⁸ C. E. Shields and wife, "Wants Prayers," *ibid.*, No. 93 (June 5, 1915), p. 2.

⁹⁹ Lusta Shields, "A Few Testimonies," *Word and Witness*, XII, No. 10 (October 20, 1915), p. 3; and A. W. Gold, "Requests for Prayer," *The Weekly Evangel*, No. 101 (July 31, 1915), p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ E. G. Bailey, "Revival News in Homeland," *Word and Witness*, IX, No. 10 (October 20, 1913), p. 3; A. E. Humbard, "Revival News in Homeland," *ibid.*; "Calendar of Camp Meetings," *ibid.*, X, No. 5 (May 20, 1914), p. 4; personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Roy L. Steger, August 6, 1970; and E. R. Winter, Thirty-five Years on the Range for Jesus: Four-hundred and Fifty Revivals (Privately published, 1960), p. 20.

county, produced almost a dozen "Spirit-filled believers" by the autumn of 1914.¹⁰¹ Valeria Lee Hammond, the next known evangelist to labor there, spent the early months of 1915 evangelizing the community.¹⁰² And around 1918 Roy L. Steger and Clarence Evans held meetings on Saturdays and Sundays at different schoolhouses in the area approximately seven miles west of Lawton. Evangelists Steger and Evans also conducted, in the latter part of 1918, a revival in Lawton, at which time there was no established Pentecostal work in the town.¹⁰³

With Stephens county remaining an evangelistic field in the period from 1913 to 1918, a Pentecostal campaign was held at Velma as early as July, 1913. Ethel Musick, who later became one of the Oklahoma District's greatest and most successful evangelists, conducted her first revival there, assisted by two co-workers, all three being under nineteen years of age.¹⁰⁴ After this three-week meeting, yielding sixty conversions and thirty "infillings of the Holy Spirit," the party went to nearby Alma where a man, near the edge of the brush arbor, was shot during an altar appeal of one of the services. Evangelist Musick later wrote, "He was bleeding to death, but the Lord heard our prayer and healed him. We continued the altar call and two were saved."¹⁰⁵ In the summer of 1915 E. W. Asten of Alex, Oklahoma, reported that individuals with "all manner of diseases were . . .

¹⁰¹The Christian Evangel, No. 64 (October 24, 1914), p. 2.

¹⁰²Ibid., No. 76 (January 30, 1915), p. 4.

¹⁰³Personal interview with Steger, August 6, 1970.

¹⁰⁴H. M. Savage to the author, July 10, 1966.

¹⁰⁵Ethel Musick, Life and Testimony of Ethel Musick, Evangelist (Privately Published, Undated), pp. 10-11.

healed" in a Duncan, Oklahoma, meeting conducted by a Reverend and Mrs. Zimmerman.¹⁰⁶ And a man named Will Livingood moved from Sulphur, Oklahoma, to Duncan around 1918. Owing a Ford jitney, Livingood earned \$10.00 by hauling people around in the area. With this money, he purchased groceries and supplies for visiting Pentecostal ministers and groups that came to Duncan. Among the earliest to come were the Reverend and Mrs. Marion F. Mason of the Pea Ridge Community east of Rush Springs. Their services, conducted under a grove of trees in Will Livingood's yard, as well as the above-mentioned endeavors and other similar efforts, were the "beginnings of Pentecost" at Duncan.¹⁰⁷

Several communities in Beckham and Washita counties experienced Pentecostal contacts before the approximate five-year period of evangelistic thrust in the state began around 1913. However, these counties continued to be frequent fields of labor for full-gospel workers in the ensuing years. W. D. Wilkins reported "two . . . saved and one baptised in the Spirit" at Doxie in September, 1913.¹⁰⁸ And printed in the December 20, 1913 issue of Word and Witness, the list of "Ordained Elders, Pastors, Ministers, Evangelists, and Missionaries of The Churches of God in Christ with Their Stations for 1914" located several individuals in Beckham and Washita counties: Henry Dunlap, Canute, Oklahoma; W. L. Lambert, Elk City, Oklahoma; J. C. Hawkins, Doxey, Oklahoma; George W. Nichols, Sayre, Oklahoma;

¹⁰⁶ E. W. Austen, "God Heals of Palagra," Word and Witness, XII, No. 6 (June 20, 1915), p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Personal interview with Mrs. Marion Mason, August 3, 1968.

¹⁰⁸ W. D. Wilkins, "Revival News in Homeland," Word and Witness, IX, No. 9 (September 20, 1913), p. 3.

and F. D. Hall, Carter, Oklahoma. Likewise, the following year, 1915, O. J. Knight of Dill, located ten miles west of Carter, expressed the need for a Pentecostal worker "who . . . [could] preach the full gospel" in that community.¹⁰⁹

Caddo and Grady Counties are the final areas of Oklahoma to be discussed as part of the first wave of Pentecostal evangelism which seized the state about 1913 and did not subside until around 1918. As mentioned in Chapter II, the Rush Springs area was penetrated by the Pentecostal message as early as 1911. This area, in 1915, was still the scene of many conversions and "Spirit baptisms." In April of that year some fifteen were converted and twenty underwent baptisms characterized by glossolalia.¹¹⁰

W. A. and Valeria Lee Hammond found no Pentecostal people at Chickasha in February, 1915, reporting in The Weekly Evangel: ". . . [This] is a hard place but God is able. . . . The people do not come much, but we get to preach to many on the streets."¹¹¹ The Hammonds, however, later received assistance in the work from a Pentecostal couple, the LaBerges, of Houston, and the twice-weekly cottage meetings which were initiated soon produced results: "Two are seeking the Baptism, a man and his wife. Some have asked to be prayed for to receive their healing."¹¹²

¹⁰⁹O. J. Knight, "A Worker Needed," The Weekly Evangel, No. 107 (September 11, 1915), p. 2.

¹¹⁰M. G. Dunlap, "A Testimony," *ibid.*, No. 94 (June 12, 1915), p. 4.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, No. 83 (April 3, 1915), p. 1.

¹¹²*Ibid.*

Arriving in Chickasha from Texas in the summer of about 1917, the Reverend Oscar Jones and wife began conducting services in homes and on streets of the city. However, those were days of considerable hardship. Jones was forced to commence work in order to provide food and lodging for his family, and the chief of police of Chickasha, later a very close friend of Jones, initially opposed the group and broke up its street meetings. Writing later, the Joneses vividly recalled one night, in particular, during this trying period:¹¹³

It was a very cold night, and we had no food for the children. We told them to be nice and pray that the Lord would give a good street meeting.

Someone gave 10¢ in the night's offering. We bought pop corn for the children which made them very happy.¹¹⁴

Finally, in the early part of 1919, an old Methodist church building was rented by the small Chickasha band of Pentecostal believers.¹¹⁵

The Ruef Nicholsons were the earliest known Pentecostal family at Cement, Caddo county. They conducted a campaign there in early 1917. In the summer of that year, the Marion F. Mason, Charles M. Wolford, and Will T. McLaughlin families came to Cement for a tent revival. They returned in February, 1918, for a winter meeting held in the home of George Wagner. Although first "introduced to Pentecost" in the 1917 Nicholson meeting, the Roy L. Stegers were converted, "received an Acts 2:4 experience," and, became Pentecostal ministers as a result of this 1918 endeavor, thereafter establishing or playing

¹¹³Oscar Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Harry M. Myers to author, July 9, 1966.

a major role in the establishment of several churches.¹¹⁶

From the wave of Pentecostal evangelism that engulfed the Oklahoma District in the years 1913 to 1918 many churches were ultimately organized which affiliated, within a few months or years, with the Oklahoma District. The extensive evangelism of the period assumed a basic pattern: A Pentecostal evangelist, as were most early-day Pentecostal pioneers, would arrive in the "target" community. The community usually had no church, only a few "believers" or interested individuals. A revival would be conducted, after which the evangelist quickly departed. Following the revival, a prayer meeting customarily continued, and out of the prayer groups a church ultimately was organized. However, this pattern often varied in at least one important respect: A church often was established before the evangelist departed for his next campaign in another community.

The participants of the evangelistic surge from 1913 to 1918, as well as most of those who participated in the evangelization of the Oklahoma District during its formative years, were primarily lay preachers. They had no formal theological training, only a "burden" for the spiritual welfare of a community. In general the "Pentecostal message" was propagated throughout the Oklahoma District by "witnesses" rather than by ministers. Organized meetings followed, but even

¹¹⁶ Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966 and Mr. and Mrs. Steger, August 6, 1970.

these were often promoted by laymen. The participants were basically self-supporting, and often made material sacrifices because of their zeal for the "Pentecostal message." "Some [slept] on the ground and in stock barns. . . . They . . . lived on sardines and vienna sausages . . . [and went] without food for days to get a meeting started . . ."¹¹⁷

And finally, the evangelism that persisted in the five years prior to 1918 was of the "straw-fire" type where evangelists moved quickly from meeting to meeting with seemingly little thought for the welfare of converts left behind. This was perhaps the greatest weakness of the period's evangelistic endeavors. The great emphasis was on acquiring conversions and "Spirit Baptisms." However, the circumstances, according to one District pioneer, under which most Pentecostal pioneers of the period labored, militated, at least in part, against any alternate type of evangelism. Since few Pentecostal groups of the period had a permanent church building, revivals were of necessity conducted by the seasons of the year and their length often dependent upon the availability of some public facility in the community.¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, the period's evangelism, by its excessive itinerant nature, limited the Oklahoma District's full potential for growth in the years from 1913 to 1918. Although the Oklahoma District was a "fertile field" for Pentecost during the time, the innumerable "first Pentecostal contacts" made in communities across the state constituted only a partial base upon which continued growth and development toward maturity of the Oklahoma District could occur.

¹¹⁷C. C. Burnett, "Forty Years Ago, Part I," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2081 (March 28, 1954), p. 12.

¹¹⁸Personal interview with Eiting, July 8, 1967.

CHAPTER IV

THE OKLAHOMA DISTRICT: CONTINUED

GROWTH AND MATURITY

The election in 1922 of the Reverend Oscar Jones as Chairman of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God represented the culmination of an eight-year period during which the loose administrative and structural organization of the state fellowship, as well as its membership, underwent slow but inevitable growth and maturation.

The office of Chairman of the Oklahoma District frequently was filled, as were the other District executive positions in the early years, by individuals of surprisingly high ability, but only on a part-time basis. The Reverend W. T. Gaston, the first occupant of the office, "tender in spirit and always broken before the Lord," was a deeply spiritual man.¹ He became "universally acknowledged . . . [as] one of the most forceful and anointed preachers in the entire Pentecostal movement. . . ." ² And his election as District Chairman began a long productive tenure of service in the Assemblies of God, during which time he occupied a wide variety of positions -- including that of fourth General Superintendent of the national fellowship. Unusually

¹C. M. Ward, God Speaks Today (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 40.

²Carl Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 296.

capable, he commonly sat in executive meetings in silence while others struggled with the complexities of a problem -- ultimately to sum up, analytically, the considerations at hand. He was a very clever thinker.³ Neither Gaston, however, nor any of the other early occupants of the District Chairmanship, could afford to devote full-time service to the position, for each one usually served as pastor of a church and worked at least partially at some side-line vocation to support himself. A chairman, likewise, often would be elected pastor of a different church, even in another state, and would vacate the district office for that reason. And, finally, the majority of its occupants considered the office to be honorary; therefore, they soon became dissatisfied and desired to be engaged in the more concrete activities of evangelization and church establishment. There was, in fact, a rapid turn-over in the office, with six different chairmen occupying the position in the first eight years of the District's history.⁴

The Executive Presbytery of the Oklahoma District, ultimately composed of the Chairman, Assistant Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and various State Presbyters, was originally entrusted with rather limited responsibilities. However, some of these responsibilities began to be broadened and modified during the first eight years of the

³Personal interview with J. Roswell Flower, June 13, 1966; and personal interview with Ernest S. Williams, June 16, 1966.

⁴Personal interview with Glenn E. Millard, July 3, 1966. District Chairmen, and their respective terms, between the years 1914 and 1922 were: W. T. Gaston, July, 1914 to July, 1915; Willard H. Pope, July, 1915 to August, 1916; J. R. Evans, August, 1916 to October, 1917; S. A. Jamieson, October, 1917 to October, 1920; Fred Eiting, October, 1920 to Fall, 1921; and Paul H. Ralston, Fall, 1921 to December, 1922.

District's existence. The District Chairman's duties were administrative, but also evangelistic and pastoral. In addition to presiding over the council meetings, the Chairman engaged in a "field ministry" whereby he attempted, through exhortation of the Word of God, and fellowship, "to encourage and knit the hearts of the people together."⁵ An assistant District Chairman was chosen in 1915 or 1916 to complete any unexpired term of a District Chairman. John Linn, the twenty-sixth minister to affiliate with the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, was the first individual to serve in this position.⁶ And by 1917 the positions of District Secretary and Treasurer had been combined into one office.⁷

Furthermore, with the District's size complicating the problem of travel, as well as that of communication by Executive Officers with local congregations and ministers, the Oklahoma District Council in its 1917 meeting elected six State Presbyters, thus completing the Executive Presbytery. Each presbyter was to serve in his respective part of the state. The following were chosen for one year terms: S. L. Shockey, Pawhuska; Fred Eiting, McAlester; S. A. Jamieson, Tulsa; Thomas J. O'Neal, Wellston; J. J. Grubbs, Waurika; and Oscar Jones, Chickasha.⁸ Each had the responsibility of maintaining a general oversight of the churches in his particular area -- being concerned that

⁵ Personal interview with Williams, June 16, 1966.

⁶ Assemblies of God News in Oklahoma--Oklahoma District, IV, No. 7 (July, 1955), p. 4.

⁷ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 3.

⁸ Ibid., p. 2; and personal interview with C. O. Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

each church had a pastor, attempting to settle differences within congregations by serving as a mediator, etc. The State Presbyters also constituted a committee to examine candidates for ordination or license, each Presbyter inquiring into the qualifications of his respective applicants. This committee functioned at each state meeting of the District Council. And in the event a candidate requested license or ordination between regular Councils, the District Executive Committee acted upon the recommendation of the proper Presbyter, as a candidate was expected to communicate initially with the Presbyter in his section of the state.⁹

The District Council Meeting, in the beginning years, provided the state fellowship, ministers and laymen alike, with one of its few opportunities for state-wide spiritual association and intercourse. Hence the early District Councils commonly were more devotional in nature than business oriented. Business matters, although important, were usually not very complicated, and the Council sessions quickly assumed a spiritual tone. The Reverend Fred Eiting, recalling his first attendance at an Oklahoma District Council, reminisced:

The 1917 District Council was held in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. There were six deacons, seven Ordained Ministers, and several Sunday School teachers present at its sessions, numbering about eighteen individuals in total attendance.

⁹Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, pp. 3-4.

Brother S. A. Jamieson taught us in Bible Study, and we cried mostly, praying and interceding to God for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the state of Oklahoma.¹⁰

A spiritual atmosphere likewise prevailed at the Council which convened at Claremore on April 1, 1919, according to host pastor A. R. Donaldson, with "good meetings every night and . . . as many as twenty-five at the altar at once."¹¹ The lack, or perhaps de-emphasis, of business affairs at early-day District Councils was again in evidence at a second Council Meeting held at Panama, Oklahoma, beginning on October 28 of that year:

We were compelled to crowd the business sessions into two days, as our District Chairman, Brother S. A. Jamieson, had to return to his work in Tulsa. The evening services were of an evangelistic nature, and God wonderfully manifested his power in saving souls and reclaiming back-sliders.¹²

And finally, the annual District Council session at which qualified applicants received "license" or "ordination" usually carried heavy spiritual overtones. This was generally a highlight event of Councils, for the observation of fellow workers who had responded to the challenge of "propagating the Full-Gospel message" and who were aspiring for ministerial credentials proved to be a religiously uplifting experience

¹⁰ Personal interview with Fred Eiting, July 8, 1967. The "Council Roll of Visiting Brethern," 1917, showed the following present: Thomas J. O'Neal, Wellston; E. F. Eidson, Wellston; Paul H. Ralston, Wellston; S. A. Jamieson, Tulsa; Mr. & Mrs. E. G. Gray, Tulsa; J. J. Grubbs, Waurika; G. N. Grubbs, Waurika; Sylvia Shelton, Hinton; Miss Copley, Hinton; Mr. & Mrs. S. L. Shockey, Pawhuska; J. R. Evans, Pawhuska; Fred Eiting, McAlester; Joe Rosselli, Broken Arrow; and G. E. Arnold, Panama. In addition a number of members of the local assembly were reported in attendance at the Council meetings. Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 2.

¹¹ "Reports From the Field," The Christian Evangel, No. 284-85 (April 19, 1919), p. 14.

¹² "Oklahoma District Council," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 314-15 (November, 1919), p. 11.

for all in attendance.¹³

The Oklahoma District Council Meeting held at Chickasha in October, 1920, provides a typical example of the atmosphere of Pentecostal comradeship at an early-day Council. Hosted by the Reverend Oscar Jones and wife, pastors of the local assembly, the Council sessions were conducted in a rented Methodist church building, about thirty-six feet by fifty feet.¹⁴ Lodging for the approximately twenty ministers who attended the Council was furnished free. As many as possible stayed in the three-room home of the pastors. Some were lodged in the homes of members of the local assembly, and others slept in the church building. The meals, served on a free-will offering basis, were all cooked in the Joneses' home by Mrs. Jones. She later wrote: "It wasn't hard to plan the meals. I just prepared a big pot of beans, cooked some cabbage, fried potatoes, baked corn bread, fixed gravy, and put out some molasses."¹⁵ Accommodations for the Council were evidently satisfactory, for "a blessed feeling of fellowship and co-operation among the brethren" was reported.¹⁶

The Oklahoma District, throughout its formative years, had no permanent headquarters or Council location, and its Council sessions convened annually except for a brief period when biennial meetings were

¹³Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

¹⁴Personal interview with Roy L. Steger, June 3, 1966.

¹⁵Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

¹⁶"Oklahoma District Council," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 366-67 (November 13, 1920), p. 14.

conducted.¹⁷ The site of each year's Council Meeting was usually voted upon by the previous District Council in session or designated in advance by the Presbyters. The impermanency of the District Council Meeting site being a fact, it is interesting to note that the 1927 District Council voted "to purchase the twenty-four tents that had been rented for . . . [that] camp and Council in session."¹⁸ The District headquarters' address was commonly determined by the location of residence of the District Chairman or Secretary-Treasurer.¹⁹

The regulation of ministerial qualification was a subject of early action by Oklahoma District Councils. The 1917 Council at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, voted "to examine candidates for ordination or license at the State meeting of the District Council. . . ."²⁰

¹⁷The Oklahoma District Council voted, in 1917 to have both a spring and fall meeting each year. Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 3. However, this practice was followed, from all indications, only two years, 1918 and 1919. And listed as a "Standing Resolution" in the 1927 District Minutes was a proposal for an annual meeting, unless circumstances required additional ones. Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1927, p. 7.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁹Personal interviews with Haymaker, June 26, 1966 and with Steger, June 3, 1966. A resolution, however, approved by the District Council at Tulsa in 1928 named Enid as the permanent headquarters. Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1928, p. 5. Since the Council in that identical year, also voted to assume district control of Southwestern Bible School, likewise located in Enid, the above resolution no doubt was passed in an attempt to centralize operations of the District. Ibid., p. 15. The new District Superintendent, James Hutsell, having just completed his first year in office, was reluctant to move operations from his home at Slick, Oklahoma, to Enid, because he felt District headquarters of necessity should be more centrally located. Therefore, with Hutsell never relocating, the District continued to have no permanent headquarters or Council site. Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

²⁰Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 3.

Likewise, it directed the District Secretary to inform the Credentials Committee of the General Council of the Assemblies of God to issue no credentials or fellowship certificates to anyone in Oklahoma who had not been approved by the State Presbytery.²¹ This board, the State Presbytery, was authorized sometime before 1924 to rule on the respective pretensions of the candidates,

to examine into the morals, doctrines, and ability of such as are already ordained, and who shall desire admission or who have been admitted to the roster of this council, where question is raised as to their qualifications along these lines, and to deal with such applicants upon the ground of their conformity or non-conformity to the scriptural standards.²²

Thus the candidate was not required to take a written examination for ministerial qualification, neither were there any specific formal education requirements. Early Pentecostals in fact had an aversion to education as a requirement for the ministry. The candidate instead was customarily requested to affirm in oral fashion before the committee his conversion, endorsement of the four cardinal doctrines of the Full Gospel, and his Godly call to the ministry.²³ Through the years these verbal examinations became more rigorous, some being "real stem winders."²⁴ And in 1924 the District Council, in session at Shawnee, Oklahoma, recommended that ministers avail themselves of a two-year reading course offered by the General Council.²⁵ However, ministerial

²¹Ibid., p. 4.

²²Ibid., 1924, p. 14.

²³Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966.

²⁴Personal Interview with Robert Goggin, August 8, 1967.

²⁵Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 7.

qualification remained basically, as a pioneer District official stated, "a matter of the burden of one's heart, good character, and ability to magnify the Lord."²⁶

The Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God issued, over the years, a number of Credential Certificates and, in turn, recognized various certificates granted by the General Council in Springfield, Missouri. The "Certificate and Credential of Unity," issued by 1918, signified that the holder was in good standing with the District, was sound morally and doctrinally, but had not reached the maturity of ordination.²⁷ "District Ordination," the highest investment of ministerial authority in the state fellowship, was an intermediate step between "District License," the preparatory stage to ordination, and "General Council Credentials," the highest investment of ministerial authority in the national fellowship and most prestigious certificate a minister could hold.²⁸ The Oklahoma District Council of 1925, however, voted to "discontinue . . . District Ordination papers . . . and . . . recognize only licenses and General Council Credentials."²⁹ And finally, in 1927 the District began issuing the "Certificate of Fellowship." A licentiate who maintained an exemplary life and remained doctrinally sound received this each year, rather than being issued a new District license annually.³⁰

²⁶ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

²⁷ Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

²⁸ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

²⁹ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1925, p. 4.

³⁰ Ibid., 1927, p. 5.

As evidenced in the establishment and growth of a number of churches to recognized positions within the state fellowship, the Oklahoma District, in the eight-year period from 1914 to 1922, experienced a slow but steady growth. For purposes of brevity, two churches will be discussed: Pawhuska and Chickasha, neither in existence in 1914 when the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God was organized but two of the most prominent assemblies of the District by 1922.

The Pawhuska assembly, one of the largest churches in the District by 1922, was founded in 1915 through the determined efforts of the Pope evangelistic team. Willard and Fannie Pope, Sam and Alice Shockey, Kimbal and Mabel Gray, and William and Grace Boyles formed an evangelistic party for a Pawhuska campaign in August, 1915. A series of events hindered their work there -- a two-week delay in the arrival of the tent furnished by Boyles, depleting housing and food finances, the Gray's infant becoming deathly ill, and Bird Creek, usually a mere trickle, flooding the town and washing out two bridges, closing the revival for an additional two weeks. However, by September the long-overdue revival began to produce results.³¹ One month later fifty to sixty people had been converted and "the town . . . [had been] turned upside down, . . . [with] great crowds attending every night."³² Two of the meeting's notable converts were Mr. and Mrs. Dexter E. Collins, who, as pastors of the Wellston church during years of great revival, 1922 to 1924, made "an indelible mark for Pentecost" in that communi-

³¹Mr. & Mrs. Willard H. Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

³²Word and Witness, XII, No. 10 (October 20, 1915), p. 8.

ty.³³ From the above-mentioned revival came a sufficient number of converts for the organization of a church. When winter forced the congregation out of the tent, it relocated in an old U. S. Post Office building. The Popes remained as pastors until 1917, during which time a tabernacle was constructed.³⁴ In 1919, Fred Eiting came as pastor of the assembly, still meeting in the tabernacle.³⁵ Nevertheless, the church by 1917 had risen in stature within the District and was chosen as the location for that year's Oklahoma District Council Meeting.³⁶

Founded approximately three years after the organization of the Oklahoma District, the church at Chickasha became the best known assembly west of Wellston, and by 1920 both directly and indirectly provided the impetus for the "spread of Pentecost" throughout the surrounding area within the next three years. In addition to serving as pastor of the Chickasha church, the Reverend Oscar Jones, its founder, directed several campaigns in nearby communities. A pioneer work was established, in 1921, seven miles south of Chickasha at Ninnekah, where at an initial revival ninety-one persons received the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit."³⁷ Later, around 1922, the Joneses moved to

³³Pope to the author, July 2, 1970; and Dexter E. Collins, "When the Fire Fell," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 2740 (November 3, 1966), p. 6.

³⁴Pope to the author, July 2, 1970.

³⁵Personal interview with Eiting, July 8, 1967.

³⁶Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1917, p. 1.

³⁷Jones to the author, June 26, 1966; and Oscar Jones, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 380-81 (February 19, 1921), p. 22.

Ninnekah and built a church.³⁸ However, while still pastor at Chickasha, Oscar Jones, during revival, induced visitor Roy L. Steger, leader of a small Pentecostal group in nearby Cement, to host the 1920 State Camp meeting. Steger eagerly consented to build a brush arbor, and Jones arranged for the camp's speakers.³⁹ The meeting began July 22, with Jacob Miller as evening speaker and C. M. Riggs as morning Bible teacher.⁴⁰ People came in covered wagons, complete with bedding and equipment for camping. Afternoon prayer services were of the "grove meeting" type, where "the ladies went in one direction and the men went in the other."⁴¹ Following these, one evening about dusk, an unforgettable event occurred:

The people had come in from the grove services, and the arbor was completely packed with hundreds of people and others crowded around its sides.

These rejoicing saints began singing and marching around the arbor. On the outside, believers, and non-believers alike, said they saw little streaks of lightning dancing around the top of the arbor. Of course, to the believers, it was nothing but the power of God.⁴²

Likewise, many miraculous healings were reported. One such "healing" occurred when a large man, peering at an altar service from a bench, accidentally stepped from the bench into the chest of a twenty-one month old infant, later an Assemblies of God minister, the Reverend Paul W. Savage, asleep on a pallet on the arbor's floor. The child

³⁸ Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

³⁹ Personal interview with Steger, August 6, 1970.

⁴⁰ "Camp Meeting," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 348-49 (July 10, 1920), p. 8.

⁴¹ Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966.

⁴² Ibid.

though believed to be dead, was, after prayer in his behalf, revived.⁴³ The camp meeting, scheduled for ten days, fostered a revival which lasted four weeks, with over seventy-five people receiving "Holy Spirit Baptisms."⁴⁴

On the strength of the 1920 Cement camp meeting and revival, the Cement group erected a small 20 feet by 40 feet building in which to worship and by 1923 was itself instrumental in the further "spread of Pentecost" in the area.⁴⁵ In a tent revival at that time, several individuals from nearby Cyril visited the Cement services, and at the close of the meeting the evangelist Ethel Musick, along with Pastor Steger of Cement, went to Cyril for a campaign. Steger stayed two weeks, and evangelist Musick continued the services another two weeks after his departure, organizing the Cyril assembly.⁴⁶ Thus, beginning at Chickasha in 1920, a series of revivals resulted in the "spread of Pentecost" and establishment of additional churches in the surrounding area by 1923.

The Reverend Oscar Jones served as Chairman of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God from 1922 to 1927. His five years in office, the longest Chairmanship term of the entire fifteen formative years of the fellowship in the state, were the core years of District establishment and maturity, with growth continuing unabatedly. Jones, who had attended the Hot Springs organizational

⁴³Paul W. Savage to the author, July 10, 1966.

⁴⁴Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966; and The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 360-61 (October 2, 1920), p. 14.

⁴⁵Roy L. Steger, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 364-65 (October 30, 1920), p. 14.

⁴⁶Personal interview with Mr. & Mrs. Steger, August 6, 1970.

meeting in 1914 and was one of the earliest General Council ministers in the Oklahoma District, became the first Chairman to devote full time to the duties of the office. As Chairman, he received no official salary the first year, only offerings given him as he traveled among the churches conducting business for the District. These totaled six hundred dollars. Traveling expenses alone consumed this amount, with no funds remaining for headquarters operational costs at home. Therefore, Mrs. Jones, in order to meet pressing District needs and support the family, continued that year as pastor of the Ninnekah church, her husband's former pastorate before becoming Chairman. Even so there were times when financial conditions forced her and the children into the cotton fields to earn additional income.⁴⁷

Finances remained a serious problem of the District during most of Jones' tenure as Chairman. In his second or third year in office, Jones was given a \$35 weekly salary when, in recognition of the insufficient support previously given him, the ministers of the Council were requested to send in a dollar and a half each month.⁴⁸ As with Jones, Secretary-Treasurer Glenn E. Millard, elected in 1922 at the age of eighteen, was paid no salary at first, but was dependent upon "a voluntary support from the assemblies and the brethren of the field."⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

⁴⁸ Ibid.; and Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 9.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1925, p. 6.

The District eventually paid him \$15 a week, later raising his salary to \$30 weekly, where it remained for quite some time.⁵⁰ These limited salaries often challenged District Executives in the performance of their duties to live not only "by" faith -- but "on" faith.

. . . I wrote my Superintendent, Oscar Jones, . . . trying to get a group of people together that had left our church. . . . I drove into Ardmore . . . , and walking down to the depot, I found Reverend Jones. Here's what had happened:

. . . When he got my letter . . . , he lacked \$2.90 having money enough to buy his ticket to Ardmore. He had a family prayer meeting with his little family, . . . left his revival in care of his wife, packed his little case and walked down to the depot. He had forty minutes before time for the 'passenger' to come through. . . .

Finally a stranger kept walking around with his hands in his pockets looking at Elder Jones, and then at the other people. Finally, he walked up, ripped out an oath, and said, 'I don't know who you are, don't know what you are doing here, but something is making me give you this \$3.00!'. . .

He bought the ticket and stuck the dime in his pocket and rode into Ardmore. He got there the next morning before lunch time, and walked down town to drink a cup of coffee. He started back and bought five cents worth of bulk crackers in a little country-like store on the side of the street. I found my Superintendent standing in the old Ardmore wagon yard across the Santa Fe tracks from the old depot, eating his lunch on five cents worth of crackers and drinking water out of an old hydrant. . . .⁵¹

Chairman Jones had a fast-growing District over which to preside during the 1920's. This growth was accompanied by a proportional increase in the duties of District Officials, as well as certain administrative changes. The Chairman's duties not only became more demanding, but more diversified. In addition to the normal responsibilities of an administrator, he served as a pastor and counselor to the ministers of the District, planned local camp meetings, served as "chief

⁵⁰ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁵¹ E. R. Winters, Thirty-five Years on the Range for Jesus--Four Hundred and Fifty Revivals (No Publisher, 1960), pp. 21-22.

cook and bottle washer" at various camps, set churches in order, and founded new churches.⁵² Evidently nothing was considered beyond the call of duty!

. . . [Chairman Jones] was called to a small community in Eastern Oklahoma. When he arrived by train, there was no one to meet . . . [him]. [He] finally found out that the man in charge of the assembly lived about 5 miles out in the country.

After walking all the way in the hot summer sun, there was no one at home. But . . . [Jones] went inside and found the Bible and the name of the family. The man was a farmer, . . . [so Jones] figured he and the family were in the field and would be tired when they came in. Therefore, [he] found the meal and the meat in the kitchen and cooked supper. Thus when the man and his wife came from the field, they were greeted by the District Chairman whom they had never met, but who had prepared their supper.⁵³

The District Secretary, in 1925, due to the "great development in . . . [the] district," was requested to devote time likewise to the organization of local camp meetings, the conducting of missionary rallies, and other new projects.⁵⁴ And, with a view toward the unification of the state fellowship's rapidly increasing constituency, the Oklahoma District, a year earlier, was divided into "four local fellowship meetings," each under the supervision of the local Presbyter.⁵⁵ This policy of keeping District Council activities accessible to its constituency was evident, however, in another District practice initiated as early as 1921. Chairman Fred Eiting, in announcing a "Bible

⁵² Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1925, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 1924, p. 4. The four local fellowship meetings were placed, in 1927, under the supervision of the Presbyters as a group, rather than under the supervision of the local Presbyter. Ibid., 1927, p. 5.

School for eastern Oklahoma," as well as anticipated ones for northern and southern Oklahoma, proclaimed that the "Bible teachings are for ministers and workers, but especially for saints in out of way places. We come at you with the word."⁵⁶ With retention of such a policy in mind, the District by 1927 had combined both of the above-mentioned programs into one activity executed from a local level, as seen in host pastor H. B. Law's appeal:

There will be a fellowship meeting for northern and central Oklahoma at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, May 3-5. Make your arrangements to come and . . . make it a time of real fellowship together in the Spirit. Some of the good things on the program will be Bible teaching for the deepening of our spiritual lives, and evangelistic services at night.⁵⁷

The continued growth and development toward maturity of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, principally under the steady Chairmanship of Oscar Jones, and later Superintendent James Hutsell (1922-1929), was achieved through four distinct phases:

(1) Evangelism (2) Church Establishment and Construction (3) Missions Program, and (4) Christian Education.

At full crest a year before the beginning of the Jones-Hutsell period, a wave of Pentecostal evangelism swept the Oklahoma District in the years 1921 through 1925. This second concerted evangelistic effort of the state fellowship's formative years, for purposes of this paper, will be characterized only by those activities which "brought Pentecost" to northwestern Oklahoma, the major area of concentration during

⁵⁶ "Bible School in Oklahoma," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 380-81 (February 19, 1921), p. 23. Italics added.

⁵⁷ "Fellowship Meeting," *ibid.*, No. 695 (April 30, 1927), p. 14. Italics added.

this second evangelistic effort, excluding those activities which occurred in previously evangelized areas of the District.

Several individuals were "pioneers of Pentecost" in the northwestern portion of the Oklahoma District. An evangelist, C. C. Comber, conducted meetings in the area, as well as a young man, Walter Ratzsch, who was quite successful.⁵⁸ As pastors, Alvin March and Otis R. Keener were among the earliest pioneers.⁵⁹ Twin sisters, Irene and Inez Street, sponsored and chaperoned by Mrs. Lee Sheaffer of present-day Faith Tabernacle in Oklahoma City, were also successful evangelists in the western portion of the state. They traveled from meeting to meeting in an old seven passenger Cadillac remodeled as a bus. It was painted with signs reading,

JESUS SAVES, JESUS IS COMING SOON, and WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY? and on the rear, on the trunk, where it would be read by people who passed it, was YOU MAY PASS ME, BUT YOU CAN'T PASS THE JUDGEMENT.⁶⁰

However, one family -- the Millards -- Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Millard and sons, Glenn and Gordon, were the principal "vanguard of Pentecost" in northwestern Oklahoma. Although Glenn, whose ministry began at age sixteen, and his brother, Gordon, did most of the preaching, their parents, also true pioneers of the work, were great "altar workers" and instrumental in assisting many "seekers" in "praying through" to the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" in their early meetings in that portion

⁵⁸ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁵⁹ Personal interview with Bert Webb, June 10, 1966; and Otis R. Keener to Opal Selph, undated, Kern City, California.

⁶⁰ Lee Sheaffer, The Story of Faith Tabernacle (Oklahoma City: Bowman Printing Company, 1962), p. 23; and personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

of the state.⁶¹ And ultimately C. H. Millard, the father, at age fifty entered the ministry, serving as pastor of several northwestern Oklahoma churches.

A six-county tract of Northwestern Oklahoma was the object of intense Pentecostal evangelization during the years 1921 through 1925. Communities in Major, Woodward, and Dewey counties were recipients of the "Pentecostal message" at that time. In late 1918 G. G. Collins came to Ringwood, Major county, and held a meeting three miles south of town. The following summer, 1919, "Uncle Jake" Miller and C. E. Shields, at Collins' invitation, came and conducted a tent meeting. It was in this meeting that the Millard family received their personal "Pentecosts" and, approximately two years later, went on west to evangelize.⁶² Fairview, also in Major county, experienced no known Pentecostal revival until 1922, when Willy Dunn held a ten-night revival. The small group, stemming from that meeting, had no place of worship until a church, twenty-four feet by thirty-six feet, was constructed two years later. On April 6, 1924, Dunn and G. C. Mangum, District Presbyter, "set the church in order" with the General Council of the Assemblies of God.⁶³

Woodward county, centrally located within the six counties, was the area of most activity during this period of evangelization, and proved to be a very fruitful field for the Millard family. Sons

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.; and Jacob Miller and C. E. Shields, "Reports from the Field," The Christian Evangel, No. 294-95 (June 28, 1919), p. 14.

⁶³ P. H. Loofier, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 545 (May 3, 1924), p. 12.

Gordon and Glenn conducted several precursory revivals there in the spring of 1920, but with few results. However, the following year, 1921, the entire family came for meetings. Their first revival was at Lost Schoolhouse, southwest of Quinlan, where twenty-two "received the Baptism" and "the people . . . [were] interested for miles around."⁶⁴ Mayfield Schoolhouse, southeast of Quinlan, was their next stop, where, in a meeting beginning on Christmas night, 1920, some eighty "infillings of the Holy Spirit" were experienced. Organizing a church in the area, the Millards acquired its affiliation with the General Council in the spring of 1921.⁶⁵ From Mayfield the family traveled to Quinlan for a campaign in late January or early February, 1921, and another church was organized. It, too, affiliated with the General Council early that spring. Commenting on the activity in the northwest, District Chairman Paul H. Ralston, in the March 19, 1921, issue of The Pentecostal Evangel, reported: ". . . Revivals are breaking out over the western portion of the state. Gordon and Glenn Millard, brothers, are being of much use to the Lord at various places."⁶⁶ Approximately a month after the Quinlan meeting, the Millard brothers founded a church at Curtis, and a revival at Cedardale produced from

⁶⁴Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966; and "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 376-77 (January 22, 1921), p. 15.

⁶⁵Paul H. Ralston, "Western Oklahoma Stirred with the Pentecostal Message," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 384-85 (March 19, 1921), p. 14.

⁶⁶Ibid.

twenty-five to thirty "Spirit baptisms."⁶⁷

Continuing to evangelize in Woodward county during the initial years of District-related activities there, the young Millards encountered opposition at Mooreland. Believing they had secured a hall for a revival, the boy preachers discovered that it had been rented to the town's ministers "opposing Pentecost." However, suddenly contacting the measles, the brothers were ordered to bed. And, upon their recovery approximately a month later when the ministers' rent on the hall had expired, they secured the building and began a campaign as planned, with thirty-five individuals being "filled with the Holy Spirit." A church was established, and a schoolhouse later purchased as a place of worship. In February, 1922, Otis R. Keener became the pastor, followed in 1923 by Glenn Millard, the church affiliating with the District Council in 1924.⁶⁸ At Fort Supply during this time another Millard revival was held. When the Millards arrived in Woodward, around 1922, there was already a "Pentecostal work" in the town. However, a big campaign was conducted, after which the Woodward assembly was organized. It was set in order with the Oklahoma District in 1924.⁶⁹ The remaining communities to be mentioned in Woodward county, Lone Star, Mutual, and Sharon, are believed to have been

⁶⁷"Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 394-95 (May 28, 1921), p. 14; and personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁶⁸Ibid.; Keener to Selph, undated, Kern City, California; Millard, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 493 (April 21, 1923), p. 10; and Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 8.

⁶⁹Ibid.

evangelized by the Millards a few years later.⁷⁰

Dewey county also experienced Pentecostal evangelistic visitations by the Millards in the period from 1921 through 1925. The Millard family held the first Pentecostal meetings in many of the following communities: Seiling, Taloga, Camargo, Vici, and Cestos, likewise establishing a church in all the above but Cestos.⁷¹ In early 1923 Paul H. Ralston came to Cestos for a revival and "twelve were saved, two . . . reclaimed, and eight received the baptism according to Acts 2:4."⁷² Alvin March, a young preacher from Wellston, was pastor at Taloga around 1924, and Bert Webb, another Wellstonite, held a revival there in 1925.⁷³ Evangelist D. H. Owens traveled to West Union near Vici for a meeting beginning on February 1, 1927.⁷⁴ The community of Fay had a church listed as either "Set in Order" or "in Fellowship" with the District in the 1925 Oklahoma District Council Minutes. And Oakwood, the last of the Dewey county communities to be discussed, was served as pastor by Glenn Millard in 1927. Joined at that time by his brother Gordon and by Bert Webb for a meeting at a consolidated schoolhouse auditorium north of Oakwood, the three revivalists had "the experience of their lives." The leader of a community dance orchestra, embittered over the threatened disbandment of his group by the mass conversion of its members in the meeting, unknowingly to the

⁷⁰ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Millard, "Reports From the Field," p. 10.

⁷³ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966

⁷⁴ "In the Whitened Harvest Fields," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 689 (March 19, 1927), p. 12.

evangelistic party placed a note on the pulpit during the day. Coming to the pulpit that night to preach, Bert Webb found the note which read,

We've put up with your fanaticism long enough in this community. Two or three individuals have been killed here. Start to preach, and you'll never finish your sermon. This is fair warning. You had better heed it!⁷⁵

Nothing ever became of the threat, but, as Bert Webb stated years later, "The situation was pretty real to me at that time!"⁷⁶

The second of the major evangelistic thrusts in the Oklahoma District during its formative period, occurring primarily in a six-county tract of northwestern Oklahoma from 1921 through 1925, was likewise concentrated in the counties of Ellis, Harper, and Woods. The Millards, although not nearly as active in these as in the three previously discussed counties, did, however, conduct some of the first Pentecostal meetings in them. Following Millard revivals at Waynoka and Alva, both in Woods county, churches were established, as well as at Gage in Ellis county -- the latter assembly founded solely by Gordon Millard. At Buffalo, Harper county, the Millards also held a revival and organized a church.⁷⁷ And A. C. Bates, a "pioneer of Pentecost" primarily in Texas and New Mexico, came to Buffalo for a meeting in early 1926, at which time it was still described as a "needy field."⁷⁸

Having resulted in the establishment of some sixteen known

⁷⁵ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁷⁸ "The Whitened Harvest Fields," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 640 (March 27, 1926), p. 12.

churches and the "introduction of Pentecost" to numerous other communities of northwestern Oklahoma by 1925, this second wave of Pentecostal evangelistic endeavor during the District's formative years was comparable to the earlier evangelistic thrust from 1913 to 1918. However, this second wave of evangelism, concentrated in the northwestern portion of Oklahoma and occurring between 1921 and 1925, did differ from the earlier 1913 to 1918 evangelistic thrust in at least two respects. Its pattern of evangelism was characterized less by the "straw-fire" type of the earlier period, where evangelists moved quickly from meeting to meeting with little thought for the welfare of converts left behind. In contrast, at least some effort was made during the latter evangelistic period to return to former revival sites to encourage, "fellowship," and instruct those converted in earlier meetings. Glenn Millard, establishing a residence in Mooreland, Oklahoma, around 1923, spent one winter "circuit riding as a follow-up" to those churches established under the Millards.⁷⁹ In addition, the pattern of evangelism of the 1921 through 1925 period differed significantly in that its activities were more closely co-ordinated by and/or associated with the Oklahoma District, as evidenced in several reports which the Oklahoma District Chairman made during this period to The Pentecostal Evangel concerning activities in the northwest.

Glenn Millard, in addition to being a major participant in the evangelistic thrust, was likewise District Secretary-Treasurer during the latter three years of the period, a fact which added to the district-affiliated character of much of the period's evangelism. And, finally, the

⁷⁹ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

closer relationship of the period's evangelistic endeavors with the District is substantiated by the fact that half of the churches established during the five-year flourish of evangelism were by the end of that period affiliated with the Oklahoma District. Thus the degree of maturity evident in the evangelism of the period 1921 through 1925 was itself an indication of the developing maturity of the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God.

The second phase of development toward growth and maturation of the Oklahoma District during the Jones-Hutsell years was Church Establishment and Construction, a natural corollary to the phase of evangelism previously discussed. From the earliest years of the District, church establishment was basically a matter of individual vision and initiative. An individual, acquiring a spiritual burden for a community or town, would go to that "field" and erect a tent, acquire a schoolhouse, build a brush arbor, or rent a store building and start a revival. At the conclusion of many such meetings, conducted seven nights a week for three or four continuous weeks, a church was organized and a building acquired or constructed.⁸⁰

The above-mentioned pattern of church establishment persisted in the Jones-Hutsell period, 1922 through 1929, but with certain District actions taken to facilitate the process. The Assistant District Chairman, at an unknown date, was given the responsibility of supervising home mission work.⁸¹ And, sometime prior to 1924, the Oklahoma Dis-

⁸⁰ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966.

⁸¹ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

trict created a "home mission fund,"

to be used in the opening of new work in new fields. And this fund is to be placed in the hands of the chairman and secretary of the Oklahoma District Council, to be used in securing capable and efficient evangelists for home mission work; the committee shall decide on the place and secure the evangelist; and he shall stay until the work is established and a pastor put in charge. . . . Where funds are used in establishing new work, we recommend, that, as far as possible, they replace the money which they have used, to be used in establishing the work in other fields.⁸²

This action of creating a mission fund was taken in recognition of the constant problem facing the Pentecostal pioneers of the period -- very limited finances. And many pioneers drew upon the fund to establish new works. Glenn and Gordon Millard, while evangelizing in northwestern Oklahoma, often took as little as fifty dollars from the fund, using it to pay a meter deposit, buy or rent some lumber for seats, and start a meeting and a church.⁸³ The common pattern of later financing and constructing a building, however, remained a collective effort. A portion of the amount required for building materials would often be solicited from friends, neighbors, and town businesses, the building then being constructed through donated labor.⁸⁴ Early-day Pentecostals in fact took the term "Cooperative Fellowship" quite literally in their relationships with each other. In any case, according to one pioneer, the acquisition of a building in which to worship and property on which to locate were incidental con-

⁸²Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, pp. 14-15. Italics added.

⁸³Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

⁸⁴Personal interview with Leslie Moore, June 3, 1966.

siderations, for "the idea was to take whatever steps were necessary, trust God, and make any sacrifice required . . . to preach to the people."⁸⁵ C. M. Riggs, ordained in the ministry at the Hot Springs Council of 1914, served in the newly created position, "State Evangelist," as early as 1919.⁸⁶ He is the only known individual to have occupied that position during the formative years of the Oklahoma District.

Church establishment and construction during the period from 1922 through 1929 provided not only an added degree of maturity to the state fellowship through the various supporting District actions, but it also provided an indication of the Oklahoma District's continued growth. Eighteen churches were set in order during Chairman Jones' first year in office.⁸⁷ And it appears, based upon incomplete figures given in available District Council Minutes, that an average of sixteen or seventeen churches were set in order annually during the remaining years of his tenure. Taking a son, B. V. Jones, plus Floyd Hawkins and C. C. McAfee, all in their teens, Chairman Jones personally established a church at Sand Springs, around 1923.⁸⁸ By 1924 the District Minutes showed thirty-five "Assemblies Set in Order," this number not including those listed as "Not Duly Set in Order," and the count of those listed as "Assemblies Set in Order or in Fellowship"

⁸⁵ Personal interview with Webb, June 10, 1966.

⁸⁶ The Christian Evangel, No. 278-79 (March 8, 1919), p. 14.

⁸⁷ Oscar Jones to Robert Goggin, September 26, 1965, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁸⁸ Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

was well in excess of seventy-five by the end of Jones' Chairmanship.⁸⁹ Among the largest churches in the District during these years were Fifth and Peoria of Tulsa, Broken Arrow, Okmulgee, West Tulsa, and Shawnee. Other assemblies of comparable size were Wellston, Duncan, Enid, Pawhuska, and Wilson.⁹⁰ The number of ministers, licensed and ordained, rose during the same period from one hundred and seventy-seven in 1924 to a total of two hundred and five in 1927.⁹¹ The remaining years of the state fellowship's formative period, under District Superintendent James Hutsell, an outstanding minister of unpolished demeanor but impeccable character, also experienced continued growth.⁹² By 1930 the District Minutes listed one hundred and ten churches in the Oklahoma District and two hundred and seventy-two licensed and ordained ministers.⁹³

The Oklahoma District's legacy, through its adoption of the preamble and resolutions of the General Council as its constitution, and in turn through its acceptance of a strong emphasis on missions, resulted in a third phase of development toward growth and maturation of the District during its formative years.⁹⁴ The District, however, sponsored few individual missionaries before 1930. Most of its missionary contributions were channeled through the Missionary Treasur-

⁸⁹ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924-1928, passim.

⁹⁰ Jones to the author, June 26, 1966.

⁹¹ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924-1928, passim.

⁹² Personal interview with V. H. Ray, July 12, 1966.

⁹³ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1930, pp. 33-41, passim.

⁹⁴ "District Council Established," The Christian Evangel, No. 55 (August 22, 1914), p. 1.

er of the General Council.⁹⁵ And seemingly by 1923 the District, in some circles, had gained a reputation of illiberality toward missionaries. Pastor Roy L. Steger of Cement, writing in The Pentecostal Evangel, reported: "We have been told that missionaries have been discouraged from coming our way by being told that they would hardly get railroad fare."⁹⁶ However, when Marie Jerguson, a missionary to Japan, held a service at the small Cement assembly on Thanksgiving Day, 1923, she received an offering of \$102.90.⁹⁷

The impressions of illiberality toward missionaries notwithstanding, there were indications of an early and developing interest in Missions within the Oklahoma District during the formative years. The District, sometime prior to 1924, pledged

cooperation with Brother J. R. Flower, missionary treasurer of the General Council, by assisting him and any missionary whom he may desire to bring or send to our assemblies for the advancement of the missionary interest.⁹⁸

And in 1922 the Oklahoma State Camp Meeting designated a special day, August 17, to honor missionaries. Returned missionaries Willa B. Lowther from South China, and Harry E. Bowley, from South Africa, were the featured speakers.⁹⁹

Miss Lowther, the first missionary from Fifth and Peoria Assembly,

⁹⁵ Personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966.

⁹⁶ Roy L. Steger, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 529 (January 12, 1924), p. 14.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1924, p. 11.

⁹⁹ D. E. Collins, "Reports From the Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 462-63 (September 16, 1922), p. 11.

Tulsa, was also one of the earliest missionaries to go to the field from the Oklahoma District.¹⁰⁰ And Harry E. Bowley, who received his "call" to the missions field at the First General Council in 1914, was another early missionary but left the field due to poor health around 1925, eventually becoming pastor of the Fifth and Peoria Church.¹⁰¹ In addition, there was a "missionary spirit . . . among the brethren" at the 1926 District Council Meeting in Shawnee.¹⁰² And finally, the awakening interest of the District to missions and its needs resulted in the appointment, around 1929, of a "corresponding Missionary Secretary"

to secure more information concerning our missionaries, and especially those that have gone from this District, and that such information be given out at the District Council and Sectional Council meetings. Thus letting our people know the needs on the field, that we may encourage giving to missionary work.¹⁰³

A number of missionaries became known within the Oklahoma District during its formative years. In addition to those previously mentioned, Lowther and Bowley, other early missionaries were Virgil Smith and Murray Brown.¹⁰⁴ And the 1930 District Council Minutes listed four District-sponsored missionaries: Almyra Aston, Bara Banki, U. P., India; Dessie Knight, Partabgarh, Oudh, U. P., India; Pearl Pickel,

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview with Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Riddle, August 10, 1967.

¹⁰¹ Personal interview with Flower, June 13, 1966.

¹⁰² James Hutsell, "In the Whitened Harvest Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 673 (November 20, 1926), p. 20.

¹⁰³ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1930, pp. 17-18.

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview with John Grace, June 3, 1966; and personal interview with Steger, June 3, 1966.

Cape Palmer, Liberia, West Africa; and Lois Shelton, Cape Palmer, Liberia, West Africa.¹⁰⁵ These, although District-sponsored, received no promise of monthly support such as missionaries later received. The Oklahoma District provided the initial passage fee to the missionary's field of labor, but the missionary oftentimes later had to depend upon the support that could be raised in the native country.¹⁰⁶

The Oklahoma District, in its contributions to missions, ranked high nationally in the closing years of its formative period. By 1927, according to available figures cited in The Pentecostal Evangel, the District had earned its place among the "top ten" states in the nation for its missionary offerings.¹⁰⁷ In that year the Oklahoma District pledged \$8,000 to missions, and an additional \$1,200 was pledged by an assembly at Tulsa.¹⁰⁸ It is assumed that the District goal was attained, based upon reports published in The Pentecostal Evangel citing missionary offerings for each month of the year other than January, September, October, and November.¹⁰⁹ The following year, 1928, a total of \$8,490.92 was given by the District.¹¹⁰ And in 1929, the last year in the District's formative period, a total contribution

¹⁰⁵ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1930, p. 41.

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview with Haymaker, June 26, 1966.

¹⁰⁷ "Missionary News," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 689-732, passim.

¹⁰⁸ "The Twelfth General Council Meeting," *ibid.*, No. 717 (October 8, 1927), p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ "Missionary News," *ibid.*, No. 689-732, passim. The eight monthly reports available showed the District's contribution to total \$5,476.52, for a monthly average of \$684.57. At this rate, contributions for the other four months would amount to \$2,738.28; adding this sum to the known total results in an amount in excess of the District's pledge.

¹¹⁰ "Missionary News," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 736-782, passim.

of \$7,905.35 given to missions earned the District another tenth place among the states, ranking behind California, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, Washington, Texas, and Kansas.¹¹¹ Thus through its missions program the Oklahoma District Council had likewise demonstrated a healthy state of growth which in turn held promise of even greater growth in the future.

The Oklahoma District in the period from 1922 through 1929 established two training branches for Christian service which facilitated growth but were also signs of the developing maturation of the fellowship: The Christ's Ambassadors Organization and Southwestern Bible School. These branches constituted Christian Education, the final phase of development toward growth and maturation of the Oklahoma District during the Jones-Hutsell years.

The Oklahoma District had, as did most districts across the nation, a host of young people during the Jones-Hutsell period who, although dedicated and desirous of rendering Christian service, had no specific organization through which to communicate and have fellowship or through which young people across the state could work together systematically.¹¹² Several factors accounted for the absence, state-wide and nationally, of such an organization. One consideration, however, generally explained the delay in establishing a youth organization in the Oklahoma District. Many older ministers were fearful that the army of youth, if organized, would eventually "take over."¹¹³

¹¹¹"The Thirteenth General Council Meeting," *ibid.*, No. 819 (October 19, 1929), p. 4.

¹¹²Personal interview with Eiting, July 8, 1967.

¹¹³Personal interview with Ray, July 12, 1966.

Nevertheless, with the passage of time, some local churches, realizing the particular need of youth training for participation in church activities, came to have separate youth-controlled services and groups.¹¹⁴

With the need for a state-wide young peoples' organization becoming increasingly evident, a group of young ministers, among whom were Bert Webb, D. E. Collins, and Fred Eiting, while assembled at the 1926 Oklahoma District Council Meeting at Shawnee from October 19 to 22, formed such a youth organization.¹¹⁵ They wrote a constitution and by-laws and elected these officers: Bert Webb, president; Floyd L. Hawkins, vice-president; and W. E. (Dovie) Grindstaff Ray, Secretary-Treasurer.¹¹⁶ The name "Christ's Ambassadors," first used in Southern California by an area-wide young people's organization formed in the spring of 1925 and quickly assumed by other groups across the nation, was adopted.¹¹⁷ Whereas the Southern California-Arizona District, the first in which the young people organized on a District basis, did not grant official recognition to their youth organization for two years, the Oklahoma District Council in session at Shawnee, where the young people of the state had organized, quickly approved the following resolution:

¹¹⁴Irvin J. Harrison, "A History of the Assemblies of God" (Th.D. Thesis, Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, 1954), p. 225.

¹¹⁵D. E. Collins to the author, August 7, 1967; and personal interview with Eiting, July 8, 1967.

¹¹⁶Ibid.; Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1926, p. 3; and Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1926, p. 4.

¹¹⁷Harrison, "A History of the Assemblies of God," p. 230.

Be it resolved, that we, the district Council in session in Shawnee, Oklahoma, October 22, 1926, endorse this 'Young Peoples Organization,' and pledge ourselves to cooperate with it in all its activities.¹¹⁸

Thus the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God was one of the first six districts in the nation to form its Christ's Ambassadors Organization.¹¹⁹

The first District Convention of Oklahoma Assemblies of God youth was conducted on Thanksgiving Day, 1926, at Wellston, in response to a call issued that summer for a state-wide meeting of Assemblies of God young people.¹²⁰ At least these churches sent representatives to that convention: Cestos, Mooreland, Okmulgee, McAlester, Oakwood, Morris, Wellston, Shawnee, Faith Tabernacle of Oklahoma City, and Gracemont. Arthur H. Graves, of Springfield, Missouri, delivered the keynote address, stressing the three-fold objective of the organization, "Consecrate for service, Qualify for service, and Serve."¹²¹ The proposed constitution and by-laws for Christ's Ambassadors, drawn up in October at the Shawnee District Council Meeting, were adopted as a first order of business, and three additional vice-presidents were chosen for the large Oklahoma District. Those elected were Wesley Goodwin, Marlin J. McClellan, and Wendall Shaw.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Klaude Kendrick, The Promise Fulfilled (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 141; and Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1926, p. 4.

¹¹⁹ Kendrick, The Promise Fulfilled, pp. 140-41.

¹²⁰ Personal interview with Wesley Goodwin, July 8, 1967.

¹²¹ Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1926, p. 3.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 3-4, passim.

It was also at that historic convention that two Oklahomans, Bert Webb and Floyd Hawkins, as well as Arthur Graves, designed an emblem using a large letter "C" to encircle a smaller "A" with the phrases "Christ For All" and "All For Christ" bordering the outer edges of the "C." This became the national emblem of the Assemblies of God youth organization which in turn became commonly known as C. A.'s following the designing of the emblem using those letters.¹²³ And, finally, the 1926 Wellston Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors approved a resolution restricting membership in the organization to ages fifteen through thirty-five and another endorsing the Christ's Ambassadors, a paper published by the Gospel Publishing House, as the voice of the young peoples' organization.¹²⁴ In the remaining years of the fellowship's formative period - 1927, 1928, and 1929 - very successful annual youth conventions were also held at Oklahoma City, Okmulgee, and Tulsa, respectively.

The Christ's Ambassadors organization of the Oklahoma District, for a brief time after its formation, had few state or local projects, for those attempted were usually opposed by many of the older ministers.¹²⁵ Very early, however, the Christ's Ambassadors initiated certain projects of a missionary nature. And realizing the great spiritual rewards involved, the District C. A.'s enthusiasm for missionary endeavors quickly rose with the 1927 Convention of Oklahoma District Christ's Ambassadors voting to have "each local band . . .

¹²³Harrison, "A History of the Assemblies of God," p. 231; M. Carl McCoy to the author, July 6, 1966; and Kendrick, The Promise Fulfilled, p. 144.

¹²⁴Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1926, p2.

¹²⁵Personal interview with Goodwin, July 8, 1967.

take a missionary offering twice each month."¹²⁶ The early emphasis on missions by Christ's Ambassadors was a major factor in enabling the organization to gain acceptance among its critics and become established throughout the District.¹²⁷

By the close of the Jones-Hutsell period, the young Christ's Ambassadors organization had experienced substantial growth within the Oklahoma District, receiving as well the full-fledged support of the District executive officials. Whereas the General Council of the Assemblies of God delayed recognition of the Christ's Ambassadors until 1927, the Oklahoma District Council, quickly reiterated their endorsement given at Shawnee in October, 1926. A month later, at the first District Convention of Christ's Ambassadors, in Wellston, the District's Chairman, ". . . Oscar Jones, and a number of pastors expressed their approval of . . . [the] organization and pledged their hearty cooperation."¹²⁸ James Hutsell, District Superintendent during the last two years of the District's formative period, was also "one of the best friends of the C. A.'s," personally endorsing their work at the 1928 District Convention of the Assemblies of God youth in Okmulgee.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966; and Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1927, p. 5. The following year's C. A. Convention, however, amended the above resolution to read ". . . take a missionary offering once a month. . . ." Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1928, p. 3.

¹²⁷ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

¹²⁸ Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1926, p. 3.

¹²⁹ Personal interview with Ray, July 12, 1966; and Minutes of the Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, 1928, pp. 2-3.

Thus the Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors, receiving the support of the District from their inception, had become a well established tool of the fellowship by the end of its formative period.

The second training branch for Christian service established by the Oklahoma District in the period from 1922 through 1929 was Southwestern Bible School. District interest in this type of Christian Education, the final phase of development toward growth and maturation of the Oklahoma District during the Jones-Hutsell years, was manifested as early as 1925. In that year the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, in conjunction with a local assembly in Tulsa, initiated a Bible school project. The school, a memorial to E. N. Bell, the first General Chairman of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, was to be named Bell Bible Institute, with J. W. Welch as Dean of the school and High School course work offered as quickly as possible.¹³⁰ Welch came from Springfield to Tulsa and several buildings were examined, but no satisfactory facility was found for the school. In addition, certain individuals felt the proposed institute would be too close to the General Council school, Central Bible Institute, in Springfield.¹³¹ Therefore, the 1926 District Council voted to discontinue the project.¹³²

With "interest in a Bible school in the District" continuing to persist, the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God, two years after the above-mentioned project was aborted, voted to

¹³⁰ Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1925, p. 5.

¹³¹ Personal interview with Millard, July 3, 1966.

¹³² Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1926, p. 3.

assume District control of Southwestern Bible School in Enid, founded by Doctor P. C. Nelson in the spring of 1927.¹³³ Since there was no school affiliated with the Assemblies of God between Springfield, Missouri, and California, and since Oklahoma had many small Assemblies of God churches and a large ministerial list in fellowship with the District Council, a school for the training of pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and other Christian workers seemed necessary.¹³⁴ Glenn E. Millard, District Secretary-Treasurer, in announcing District assumption of control, stated:

There are many who could not, or would not, think of going to C. B. I. because of the distance who will attend this school, and sometimes it is the boy or girl of little means who makes a mighty worker for God.¹³⁵

Southwestern Bible School, under the control of the Oklahoma District, "continued to prosper and grow" during the remaining formative years of the state fellowship.¹³⁶ The Enid Bible school building, a former public school facility, and its grounds were dedicated on February 6, 1928, with District Superintendent James Hutsell offering the prayer of dedication. Dr. P. C. Nelson, a Baptist minister for thirty-four years prior to affiliating with the Assemblies of God, remained as president of the school. There were thirty-eight students

¹³³ Glenn E. Millard, "Southwestern Bible School," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 749 (May 26, 1928), p. 13; and Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1928, p. 15.

¹³⁴ P. C. Nelson, "New Assembly and Bible School at Enid, Oklahoma," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 703 (June 25, 1927), p. 13.

¹³⁵ Millard, "Southwestern Bible School," p. 13.

¹³⁶ Blake Farmer, "Southwestern Assemblies of God College: Founding, Growth, and Development, 1927-1965: (Ph.D. Dissertation, Baylor University, 1965), p. 23.

enrolled at that time.¹³⁷ The 1928-1929 school year closed in May with an enrollment of one hundred one students and a new building to accommodate the anticipated increase in enrollment for the fall.¹³⁸ And, finally, the 1929-1930 enrollment was one hundred sixty-four with Southwestern Bible School "the largest Pentecostal Bible school east of California . . . surpassed in attendance by only one school . . . connected with . . . the movement, and that west of the Rocky Mountains."¹³⁹ However, the forthcoming depression years would mean a "time of trial and struggle" for the school.¹⁴⁰

The slow but inevitable growth and maturation of the loose administrative and structural organization of the state fellowship in the eight years following the District's organization began appearing in the form of various indirect signs as early as 1920. Among these signs were several significant developments of nomenclature. Whereas previous appeals published in The Pentecostal Evangel for workers and ministers to come and assist in a "needy field" requested "anyone who preached

¹³⁷P. C. Nelson, "Dedication of the Southwestern Bible School," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 738 (March 10, 1928), p. 13.

¹³⁸P. C. Nelson, "Southwestern Bible School Commencement," *ibid.*, No. 801 (June 8, 1929), p. 12.

¹³⁹P. C. Nelson, "To the Oklahoma District Council," Oklahoma District Council Minutes, 1930, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰Farmer, "Southwestern Assemblies of God College: Founding, Growth, and Development, 1927-1965," p. 24.

the Full-Gospel," the appeal, around 1920, began to be for "any Council minister."¹⁴¹ And by 1924 J. I. Miller of Shawnee was welcoming "Any minister in good standing with the state or General Council."¹⁴² Another direct and/or indirect sign of a degree of maturity and developing consciousness of affiliation with the Oklahoma District was the increased use by pioneers of the term "assembly" rather than "church" when reporting evangelistic activities in the various Pentecostal publications of the period.¹⁴³ This emphasis began earlier when an article explaining the implications of the term "Assembly of God" appeared in the May 20, 1914 issue of Word and Witness, at the end of which the editor admonished all ministers of the newly established cooperative fellowship "to preserve the article and make a long and thorough study of the references in their connections."¹⁴⁴

Finally, the Oklahoma District's four phases, Evangelism, Church Establishment and Construction, a Missions Program, and Christian Education, in the period from 1922 to 1929, culminated in a significant growth and maturity for the state fellowship. The work in the Oklahoma District had grown so remarkably by the end of the 1920's that the state fellowship was becoming one of the strongest in the General Council, with a growth in maturity based on developments of the formative years of 1914 to 1929.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹"Preachers Wanted," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 358-59 (September 18, 1920), p. 15.

¹⁴²"Report From The Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 567 (October 11, 1924), p. 12. *Italics added.*

¹⁴³"Reports From The Field," The Pentecostal Evangel, No. 450-51 (June 24, 1922), p. 14.

¹⁴⁴E. N. Bell, "Editor's Note On Above," Word and Witness, X, No. 5 (May 20, 1914), p. 3.

¹⁴⁵Brumback, Suddenly From Heaven, p. 268.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Before the Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God was organized in 1914, the Pentecostal movement in the state principally existed in the form of various independent groups. Their origin, as indicated by the research of this thesis, was diverse. "Pentecost," in fact spread to Oklahoma or was brought into the state by other Oklahomans from the surrounding areas of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas, with a definite relationship existing between Charles F. Parham's evangelistic endeavors in Kansas, Missouri, and Texas and the early appearance of independent Pentecostal groups in Oklahoma.

Pentecostals in Oklahoma, it appears, were no exception to the majority of those within the national movement who, particularly during the first quarter of the twentieth century, possessed a general fear of close supervision and central organization. However, the research done in the period suggests that they were equally typical of other Pentecostals who, by 1914, had become increasingly aware of the importance of cooperative effort. Thus, Oklahoma can boast her "fair share" of charter members in attendance at the first General Council of the Assemblies of God at Hot Springs in 1914.

Evangelism undoubtedly contributed more to the growth of the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma than did any other factor. There was an interest in it from the beginning of the state fellowship's organiza-

tion at Tulsa, and it persisted throughout the fifteen formative years of the Oklahoma District, 1914 to 1929. The participants in that evangelism were basically lay preachers, and seemingly Oklahoma typified the Pentecostal movement during that period in the vast number of laymen it produced who became directly involved in the task of propagating a "spiritual experience" which they felt must be given expression. Indeed, the sense of urgency to evangelize the world that fostered many of the Pentecostal lay endeavors of the state was one of the factors for "the growth of Pentecost" and the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma.

It appears that the Oklahoma District served as a "training ground" for officers of the national fellowship during its formative years, with several individuals going from Oklahoma to executive positions at the national headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. J. W. Welch, one of the earliest Pentecostals in the Muskogee area, became General Chairman of the cooperative fellowship in 1915, serving to 1919 and returning for two more years as Chairman in 1923. J. R. Evans, pastor of the Broken Arrow Assembly, was elected as General Secretary in 1923. And W. T. Gaston, the first District Chairman of the Oklahoma District, went to Springfield in 1925 as General Chairman of the cooperative fellowship.

There was no greater sign of the vibrant growth of the Oklahoma District Council than the army of young people that were attracted to the fellowship in the mid 1920's. In a sense, the real strength of the State Fellowship was in its appeal to youth, the hope of the future. Too, the District's remarkable growth in the 1920's seems to substantiate the fact that the cooperative fellowship of the Assemblies of God

was meeting the spiritual needs of an increasingly large number of individuals in the state.

Finally, although the individual members of the Assemblies of God in Oklahoma no doubt felt their special emphasis of a scriptural truth -- the Baptism of the Holy Spirit -- qualified them as true religious pioneers of the state, this study has revealed that the Assemblies of God's pattern of development in the state was no different from that followed in history by most Protestant church denominations during their formative stages: There was a beginning with fervor and opposition from other churches, converts were won, churches were established, and schools were begun for the training of ministers. Thus the Assemblies of God during its formative years in Oklahoma, 1914 to 1929, underwent a standard process of institutionalization.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscripts

Letters

- Collins, Dexter E. August 7, 1967, Fairmont, Minnesota.
- Hatley, W. O. July 15, 1966, Panama, Oklahoma.
- Myers, Harry M. July 9, 1966, Chickasha, Oklahoma.
- Jones, Oscar (to Robert E. Goggin). September 26, 1965, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Jones, Mr. & Mrs. Oscar. June 26, 1966, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Keener, Otis R. (to Opal Selph). Undated, Kern City, California.
- Pope, Mr. & Mrs. Willard H. July 2, 1970, Portland, Oregon.
- Savage, H. M. Quoted in Paul W. Savage, July 10, 1966, Seminole, Oklahoma.
- Savage, Paul W. July 10, 1966, Seminole, Oklahoma.
- Selph, Opal. September 5, 20, 28, 1967; October 23, 1967, Wellston, Oklahoma.

Interviews

- Beckham, S. E. August 10, 1967, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.
- Cathey, Anderson. August 18, 1967, Muskogee, Oklahoma.
- Eiting, Fred. July 8, 1967, Okmulgee, Oklahoma.
- Flower, J. Roswell. June 13, 1966, Springfield, Missouri.
- French, Mr. & Mrs. O. E. August 11, 1967, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- Goggin, Robert E. June 2, 1966 and August 8, 1967, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Goodwin, Wesley. July 8, 1967, Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

Grace, John. June 3, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Haddock, J. L. August 17, 1967, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Haymaker, O. C. June 26, 1966, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

Holman, Mr. and Mrs. Logan. August 7, 1970, Avant, Oklahoma.

McFarland, William T. July 18, 1970, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Mason, Mrs. Marion M. August 3, 1968, Stratford, Texas.

Millard, Glenn E. July 3, 1966, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Moore, Leslie. June 3, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Riddle, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth. August 10, 1967, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Steger, Roy L. June 3, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Steger, Mr. & Mrs. Roy L. August 6, 1970, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Stumbaugh, Joe. August 16, 1967, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Webb, Bert. June 10, 1966, Springfield, Missouri.

Williams, Ernest S. June 6, 1966, Springfield, Missouri

Privately Printed Editions

Bailey, S. Clyde. Pioneer Marvels of Faith: Wonderful Forty-six Years Experience, 1st ed., Morristown, Tennessee, Undated.

Nance, Mrs. R. E., Jr. "Saga of Sixty Years' Growth," in Sixtieth Anniversary Celebration -- Central Assembly of God. Tulsa, 1967.

Musick, Ethel. Life and Testimony of Ethel Musick, Evangelist. Anadarko, Oklahoma, Undated.

Winter, E. R. Thirty-Five Years on the Range for Jesus: Four-Hundred and Fifty Revivals. 1916.

Phonograph Record

Bates, A. C. "Gospel Message and Songs," privately produced.

Newsletters

Assemblies of God News in Oklahoma -- Oklahoma District, IV, No. 7
(July, 1955).

Assemblies of God News in Oklahoma -- Oklahoma District, VI, No. 10
(October, 1957).

Assemblies of God News in Oklahoma -- Oklahoma District, IX, No. 12
(December, 1960).

Articles

The Christian Evangel. Nos. 55, 59, 61, 65, 66, 71 (1914); 75, 76,
78, 88, 100 (1915); 278-79, 284-85, 294-95, and 304-05 (1919).

The Latter Rain Evangel. Nos. 4 (1901), 5 (1909), and 43 (1912).

The Pentecostal Evangel. Nos. 314-15, 318-19 (1919); 348-49, 360-61,
364-67 (1920); 376-77, 380-81, 384-85, 394-95 (1921); 462-63 (1922);
493 (1923); 529, 545 (1924); 601 (1925); 640, 673 (1926); 689-
732 (1927); 736-782 (1928); 801 (1929); 1689 (1946); 1786 (1948);
1907 (1950); 2081-82 (1954); 2132 (1955); 2187 (1956); 2609, 2613
(1964); 2654 (1965); 2696-97, 2716, 2740 (1966); 2752, and 2768
(1967).

Schlesinger, A. M. "A Critical Period in American Religion, 1875-1900."
Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, LXIV (1932), pp.
523-548.

The Weekly Evangel. Nos. 83, 85, 89, 93, 94, 96, 101, 107, 114, 116,
120 (1915).

Word and Witness. VIII (1912), IX (1913), X (1914), and XII (1915).

Books

Bloch-Hoell, Nils. The Pentecostal Movement; Its Origins, Development
and Distinctive Character. New York: Humanities Press, Inc.,
1964.

Brumback, Carl. Suddenly From Heaven. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel
Publishing House, 1961.

Frodsham, Stanley Howard. With Signs Following; The Story of the
Pentecostal Revival in the Twentieth Century. Revised edition.
Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1946.

- Goss, Ethel E. The Winds of God: The Story of the Early Pentecostal Days (1901-1914) in the Life of Howard A. Goss. New York: Comet Press Books, 1958.
- Hudson, Winthrop S. American Protestantism. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- _____. The Great Tradition of the American Churches. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953.
- Kendrick, Klaude. The Promise Fulfilled. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961.
- MacDonald, William. Glossolalia in the New Testament. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1964.
- Nichol, John Thomas. Pentecostalism. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- Sherrill, John L. They Speak with Other Tongues. Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1964.
- Strickland, W. P. Ed. Autobiography of Peter Cartwright: The Backwoods Preacher. By Peter Cartwright. New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1856.
- Smith, Timothy L. Called Unto Holiness--The Story of the Nazarenes: The Formative Years. Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962.
- _____. Revivalism and Social Reform. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957.
- Sweet, William Warren. The American Churches. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948.
- _____. Revivalism in America: Its Origin, Growth, and Decline. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945.
- _____. Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.
- Ward, C. M. God Speaks Today. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1961.
- Womack, David A. The Wellsprings of the Pentecostal Movement. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1968.

Minutes

- Broken Arrow, Oklahoma Assembly of God. Minutes, 1917. Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

Convention of Oklahoma Christ's Ambassadors. Minutes, 1926-28.
Personal collections of Fred Eiting and J. L. Haddock.

General Council of the Assemblies of God. Minutes, 1914-1929.
Springfield, Missouri.

Oklahoma District Council. Minutes, 1917, 1924-28, 1930. Personal
collections of Fred Eiting and J. L. Haddock.

Theses and Dissertations

Farmer, Blake L. "Southwestern Assemblies of God College: Founding,
Growth, and Development, 1927-1965." Baylor University, 1965.

Harrison, Irvine John. "A History of the Assemblies of God."
Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, 1954.

Nichol, John Thomas. "Pentecostalism: A Descriptive History of the
Origin, Growth, and Message of a Twentieth Century Religious
Movement." Boston University, 1965.

VITA

Leroy Wesley Hawkins

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: A HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN OKLAHOMA:
THE FORMATIVE YEARS, 1914-1929

Major Field: History

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Griggs, Oklahoma, June 2, 1942, the son
of Wesley and Barbara Hawkins.

Education: Attended elementary and secondary school in Plain-
view School, Griggs, Oklahoma; graduated from Plainview
High School in 1960; received Bachelor of Arts degree
from Panhandle State College, with a major in History,
in May, 1964; completed requirements for the Master of
Arts degree in July, 1972.

Professional Experience: Graduate teaching assistant in the
Department of History at Oklahoma State University, Fall,
1964 to Spring, 1966; Instructor of History at Panhandle
State College, 1966 to 1972.